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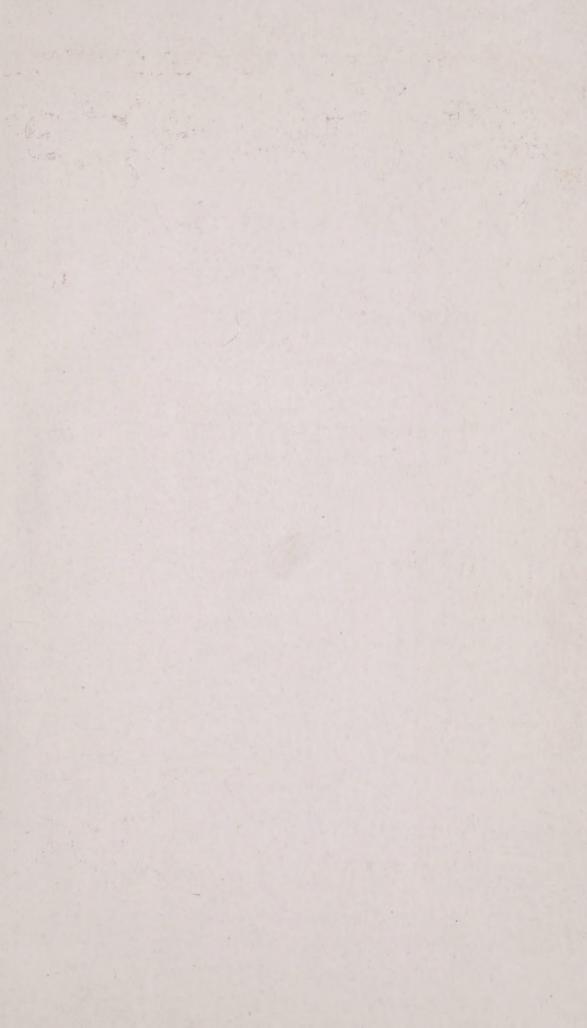
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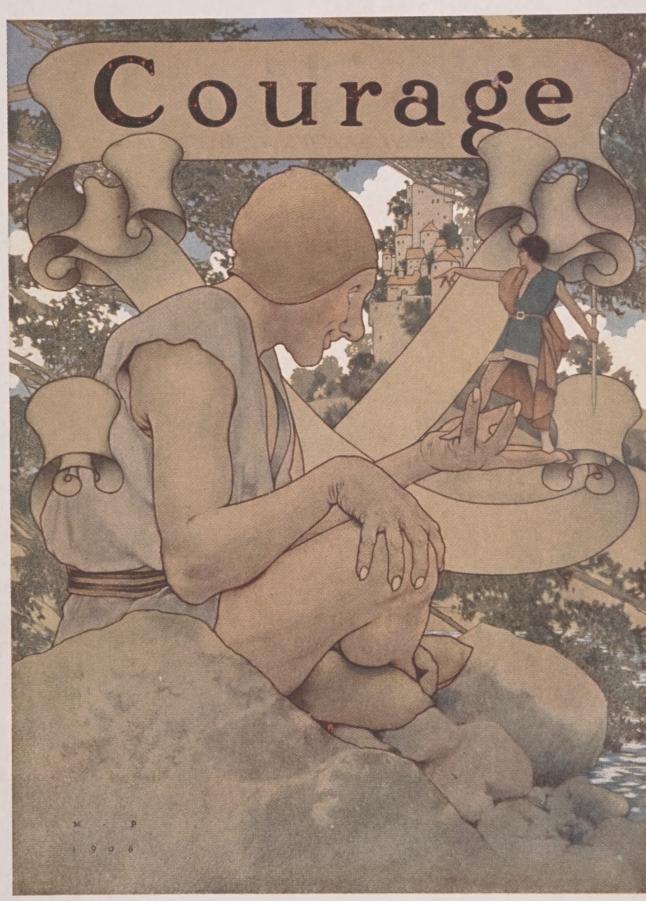
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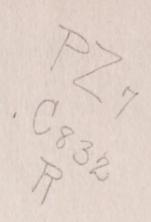
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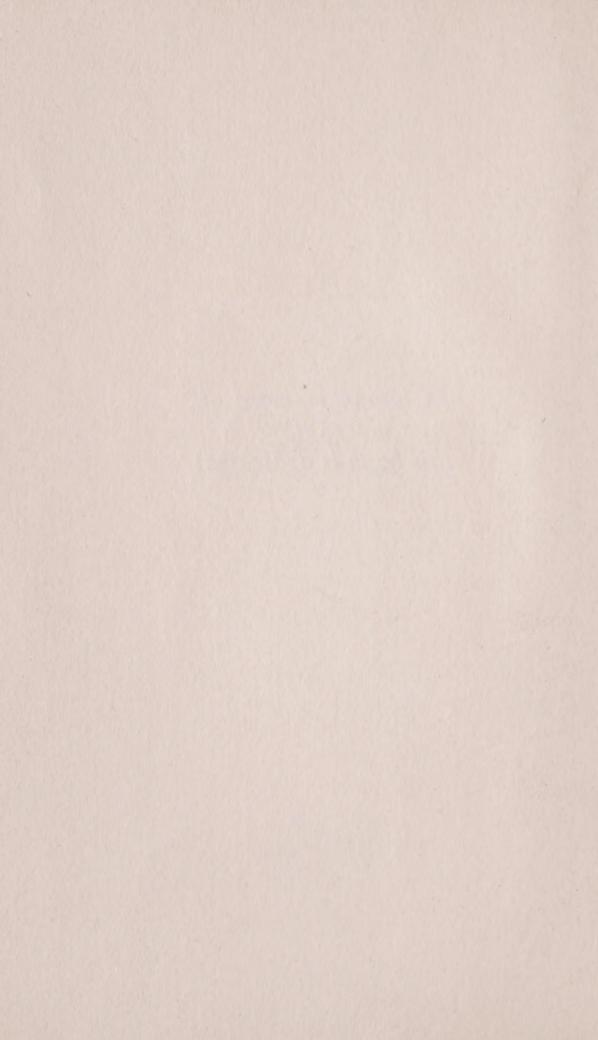
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In loving memory of my Mother this book is dedicated.



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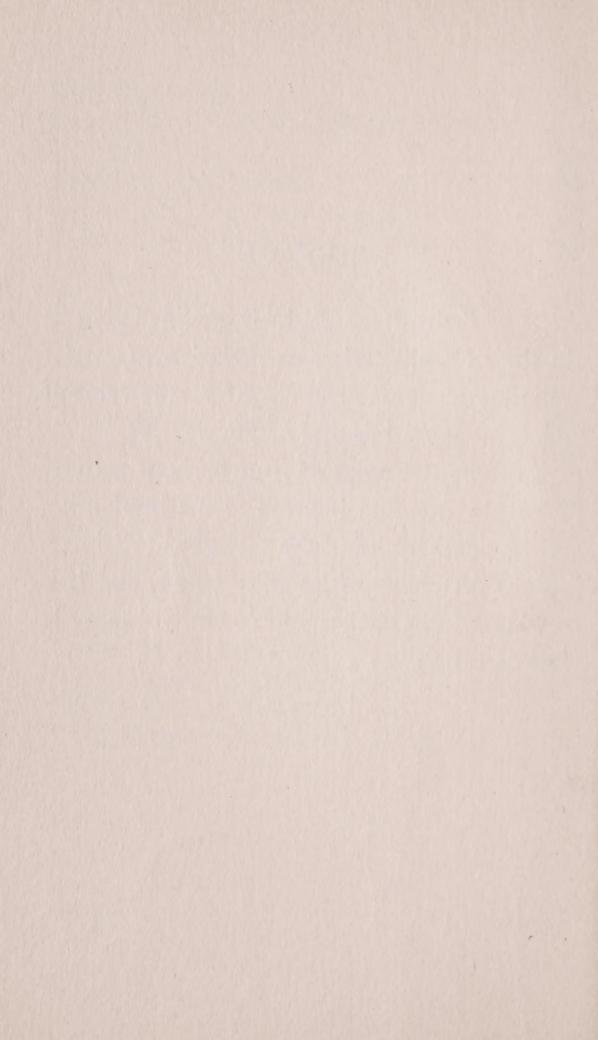
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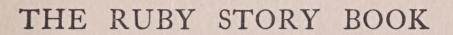
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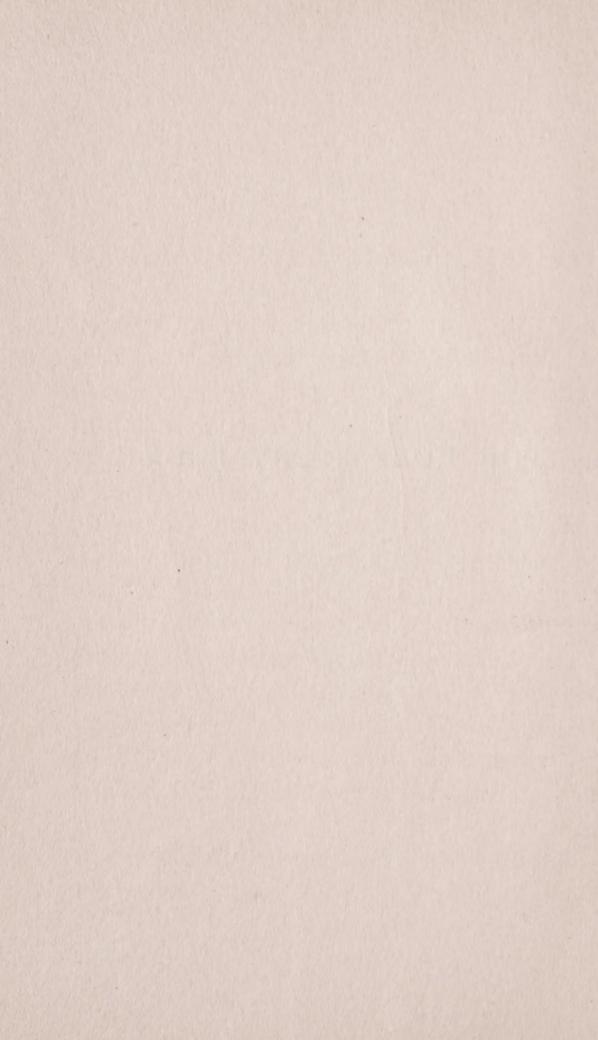
PREFACE

"The Ruby Story Book" is the third volume in the "Jewel" series, and consists of stories relating to courage and chivalry—the valor of the saint as well as that of the warrior.

In these strenuous days of business activity too little attention is given to the implanting in the youthful mind the thought of disinterested courtesy or of knightly honor, and it is the aim of this book to be of some assistance in this direction.







THE COURAGE OF GRACE DARLING

A GROUP of twenty desolate rocks, lying off the coast of Northumberland, form what are known as the Farne Islands. When the tide is low these rocks may be seen, but at high tide most of them are entirely covered by water, so that even in the best of weather sailors give this treacherous spot a wide berth.

One foggy, rainy day in September, 1838, the captain of the ship "Forfarshire" attempted to make the channel which runs between the islands and the mainland. On the day previous the vessel had sprung a leak, and despite the efforts of the crew and passengers (of whom there were forty) the water in the hold gained so that their plight had become desperate.

To add to their distress a very high sea was running, and this, together with the fog and rain, made the effort to navigate the channel practically a forlorn hope. But to reach land was their only chance for life, and so this was taken.

It was an awful moment. The ship struck on a rock, and one can hardly imagine the grinding, shivering shock. A few of the crew managed to get a boat over the side, and in this seven of them pulled away from the ship. These were picked up the next day, all of them in an exhausted condition.

The sea seemed anxious to wreak its vengeance on the ill-fated craft, and in a few minutes a huge wave lifted up the ship bodily and let it down upon the rock. With a rending crash, it broke in two amidships.

On the farthest from the land of this deadly group of rocks is an island called Brownsman, and upon this stood a lighthouse, the keeper of which was a man named Darling. Living with him were his wife and daughter Grace, a winsome maiden of about twenty years.

It may have been the storm which kept the latter awake on this particular night, but it so happened that she could not sleep. Now and

again she would look through the window at the sea, which was swirling fiercely at the foot of the lighthouse.

Suddenly she thought she heard a faint cry. Opening the window she listened intently, and heard it again. Running to her father, she awakened him, and together they stood at the open window. But though both heard the cries, they could not pierce the gloom of the night.

At length came daybreak, and with the gathering light, by the help of a telescope, they saw the wreck on the island of Longstone, about a mile distant.

Grace started for the one boat (a rather clumsy one, and hard to row) belonging to the lighthouse, but though her father tried to turn her from any thought of launching it in such a wild sea, she could not bear the idea of making no attempt to rescue those who were in peril, and said she would go alone if he would not accompany her.

So she had her way, and each taking an oar, they commenced their dangerous trip. The boat was a heavy one and unwieldy even in smooth water, so the task of guiding it in such a storm may be imagined. But after some hours of torturing labor, their efforts were rewarded by reaching the rock for which they had set out.

After having reached the island it was no easy matter to land there, but at length Darling managed it. They found ten exhausted survivors, and it was an almost superhuman task to get them into the boat and back to the lighthouse, but in time the work of rescue was accomplished.

As an example of courage, this achievement by Grace Darling and her father will never be forgotten. To attempt the rescue meant almost certain death, but on their part there was no wavering.

* THE PLOUGHMAN WHO WON KNIGHTHOOD

IN the reign of Kenneth III of Scotland, that country was invaded by the wild and fierce Danes. The King gathered an army together, and at Luncarty he faced the Vikings of the north.

There a desperate battle was fought, and the conflict continued for many hours, but at last the Danes were victorious, and the Scots were forced to retreat, fleeing in confusion. Their path lay down a long lane on either side of which was a high stone wall.

In a field, on one side of this lane, were a ploughman and his two sons, calmly at work. Seeing the Scots run in such disorder, the old man soon discovered the reason. Without

^{*} It is interesting to know that the descendants of this ploughman still bear these same arms with the motto, "Serva jugum."

hesitation he seized the yoke from the neck of the oxen he had been driving, and ordered his sons to follow his example.

The three of them then sprang into the lane, barring the fugitives. Armed only with the wooden ox-yokes, they felled with mighty blows all they could reach, and having stayed the fight, the old ploughman derided them, asking them if they were slaves fleeing from the whip of the master.

Soundly did he berate them, and doughty were the blows the three dealt.

"Turn back! turn back!" he cried. "If you have to die, die as free men, and not as slaves of the heathen."

His words and his blows had such effect upon them that they turned, and with the ploughman at their head, once more attacked the enemy.

The Danes thought that a fresh army had come against them, and in their turn they fled. This put new hearts into the Scots, who had turned defeat into victory. The Danes were driven back to the sea, and less than half their number lived to reach the ships.

After the battle King Kenneth gave orders that the brave ploughman and his sons be dressed in costly raiment and brought before him. But they had no love for fine clothes, and so went before their King wearing the shabby garments to which they were used.

The people were all eager to see the men who had served their country so well, and a great crowd gathered to see them as they passed along the road.

And so they reached the King's palace. There the ruler sat upon his throne, surrounded by gaily clad courtiers, between whom and the three men, covered with mud and dust, was a great contrast.

The King asked the ploughman how he could reward the great service he had rendered, and the old man replied:

"Your Majesty, give me as much land as a falcon may fly over without alighting."

"A modest request," said the King. And he commanded that it be done.

So they all went out into a field near the palace, and a falcon was let loose. The bird rose high in the air, and soon was but a speck in the distance. It was followed by men mounted on swift horses, and soon they were out of sight.

At last it alighted upon a stone, and the distance it had flown was eight miles, and all of this land was given to the ploughman and his sons, each of whom was knighted.

The King also directed, in order to further commemorate their deed, that they should be given a shield of silver upon which should be pictured three red shields, to show that the ox-yokes of the ploughman and his sons had been as shields to their country. On each side was shown a ploughman wielding an ox-yoke, and at the top was a falcon.

THE CID AND KING ALPHONSO

KING FERNANDO, ruler of all Spain, knew that his end was near. He had three sons and two daughters, the eldest of his children being Don Sancho, who naturally considered himself to be heir to the throne.

But the King had little love for his first-born, and lavished his favors upon his second son, Don Alphonso. So he decided that Don Sancho should not rule the whole kingdom, and therefore so arranged matters that upon his death the country should be divided into three kingdoms, to be ruled by his three sons; and to his two daughters he bequeathed two cities.

To Don Sancho he left the kingdom of Castile; to Don Alphonso, the kingdom of Leon, and to Don Garcia, his third son, the kingdom of Galicia.

To his daughters, Urraca and Elvira, he gave the government of the cities of Zamora and Toro.

And he caused each of them to swear upon the altar not to make war upon brother or sister.

When King Fernando died the country was divided as had been arranged, and for a while things went well. But the heart of Don Sancho was filled with jealousy, and he felt that he had been cheated out of his inheritance. So upon the slightest pretext he made war upon his brother, Don Garcia, whom he overthrew and put into prison.

He then turned his attention to Don Alphonso, whom he defeated and sent into exile.

Now he cast his eyes upon the two cities which were governed by his sisters Urraca and Elvira, but just at this time, when he had almost gained his heart's desire, he was slain by one of his own knights.

Don Alphonso had taken refuge in the neighboring country of Toledo, whose king liked him well, and now he returned from his exile. After taking counsel with his sisters, he laid claim to the whole of the kingdom, with the exception of the cities of Zamora and Elvira.

Then the councillors of the three kingdoms gathered together, and while the men of Leon and Galicia were ready to receive him as their ruler, those from Castile insisted that he should first take oath that he was in no way connected with the killing of Don Sancho, who had been their king.

Don Alphonso had been accompanied during his exile by twelve faithful knights, and all of them declared their willingness to take the oath, and thereby show that they were innocent of the murder of Don Sancho.

It was decided that the ceremony should take place in the cathedral of Burgos, and on the appointed day the church was crowded. But when the time came, no man could be found who was brave enough to put the oath to Don Alphonso, who was an exceedingly proud man, and might not forget the indignity when he should be king.

Then came the valorous knight, Diaz de

Bivar, the Cid Campeador (or King's Champion), who had been friend and counsellor to both Don Fernando and Don Sancho. He was a man who knew no fear, and when he saw that none would put the oath to Don Alphonso, he looked full at him and said:

"Don Alphonso, before all these people I call upon thee and thy twelve knights to swear upon the Holy Altar that none of you killed Don Sancho, or in any way had concern in his death."

With one voice Don Alphonso and his twelve knights took oath that none of them was in any way whatever connected with the death of Don Sancho.

Three times did the Cid put the oath, and then he said to Don Alphonso: "Thou hast sworn innocence, and if thy word be false, may thou die by the hand of a traitor."

Because of his pride, Don Alphonso was angered in his heart on account of the insistance of the Cid, and there were those who feared for the brave knight.

Then was Don Alphonso crowned King of Galicia, Leon, and Castile, and the Cid

thought it wise to absent himself from the court, feeling that he had gained the ill-will of his ruler.

But as he was making preparation to leave, a messenger came from the King demanding his presence.

The Cid hastened to the King, who surprised him by the warmth of his greeting. And yet something seemed to say, "Be on your guard."

Now His Majesty recognized the valor and wisdom of Diaz, and knew that he would be very foolish not to enlist his services. But the Champion's having forced him to take the oath thrice had wounded his pride greatly, and this he could not forget. He strove to show no trace of anger in his speech, and in this he was so successful that the Cid took the oath of allegiance, swore to serve his ruler faithfully, and was appointed chief counsellor.

Of course, there were knights and courtiers who were jealous, and they took care, by this way or that, to fan the King's resentment against the Cid.

But of this the Champion was unaware, and

having given his allegiance, his only thought was to uphold the honor of his ruler. And this he did through mighty deeds, so that the country rang with his praise. Many battles did he fight, both single-handed and at the head of his soldiers, and always was he victorious, so that the King began to forget the grudge he bore, and showered lands and money upon the hero.

Now this did not lessen the jealousy against him and when he would leave the court there would be whisperings, which Don Alphonso was intended to overhear, about the exultant bearing of the Cid, so that the ire in the King's heart would be renewed. But the object of these attentions was too high-minded to even suspect such things, and his only thought was how to further the King's interests.

One day Don Alphonso sent for Diaz, and requested him to demand the tribute which the Lords of Cordova and Seville owed as vassals, and had not paid. To this the Cid agreed joyfully, and gathering together his knights and men-at-arms, he was soon on his way to Seville.

On reaching his destination, he found that the King of Granada and some nobles of Castile were making war upon the King of Seville, and were pressing him grievously. At this he was wroth, and ordered the knights of Castile to at once withdraw their forces, as they were fighting against a vassal of their over-lord.

But they paid no attention to him, and so the Cid attacked them with such fury that they soon fled, leaving behind them many dead, wounded and prisoners.

Having thus succored the King of Seville, the Champion returned to Don Alphonso, bearing with him the tributes and also valuable gifts.

The King bestowed fresh honors upon Diaz, and for the time being he loved him. But it was not long before the jealous nobles managed to remind him of the thrice-given oath, but to do him justice he tried hard to forget the matter.

For some time Don Alphonso had trouble with the heathen Moors, who frequently harassed his people, and so he declared war

against them. It happened that just at this time the Cid Campeador was stricken with illness, and so Don Alphonso set out himself at the head of the expedition against the enemy.

During the King's absence, another Moorish army attacked Castile, and then the Cid, although not yet recovered, arose from his bed, and gathering together his company, fell upon the Moors, defeating them with great slaughter, capturing all their supplies and taking many prisoners. He drove them as far as Toledo, whose King had shown so much kindness to Don Alphonso during his exile.

The news of this victory soon reached Don Alphonso, who admired the courage and determination of his heroic vassal. But the jealous nobles endeavored to turn their lord against him, saying how craftily he had entered Toledo, and that between the two kingdoms there was a treaty of peace. They pointed out that his object was to create enmity between the two kingdoms by breaking this treaty, and to belittle his own ruler, even as he had done in the administering of the oath.

Really against his own judgment Don Alphonso listened to their unjust words, and the more he thought of them the greater became his anger. Hastily he returned to Castile, and refusing any opportunity for defence or explanation on the part of the Cid, he banished him immediately from the country.

This unmerited treatment aroused the indignation of Diaz, who insisted upon the thirty days of grace that was the privilege of a noble. This was denied him by the King, who, however, gave him nine days' grace, but ordered that he should go into exile alone, and that any person who should go with him, or in any way give him aid, should be despoiled of all that he had.

The Champion had no thought but that Don Alphonso visited his anger upon him because he had led his army into the country of Toledo, although no harm had resulted, but the King of Castile knew in his own heart that the only reason was the memory of the thriceadministered oath, which the jealous nobles had not permitted him to forget.

So the Cid retired to his castle at Bivar, and

found that it had been ransacked and closed by the King's order. He then rode to Burgos and found that the same thing had been done to his castle there.

He gathered the townfolk together, and asked who would go with him into exile. Soon a great company rallied around him, and one of them, Martin Antolinez, supplied them with food and drink.

Now it is one thing to get a crowd together and quite another to keep them all provided with victuals, and how to do this worried him greatly. At last he hit upon a plan. Filling two large and immensely strong chests with sand, he had each one fitted with double locks. Then he summoned two well-known money lenders, and showing them the two chests, made them believe that they were filled with treasure. Upon this security he requested a loan, and this they readily made him, having faith in the value of the pledge. The Cid made them promise that the chests should not be opened for the space of one year, and then only in case the loan were not repaid with interest.

Diaz was now supplied with money, but he was ashamed at having to secure it by such means. Still he had no doubt whatever that the repayment would be made within the year.

And now, with his company, he began his advance upon the heathen Moors, successfully besieging their towns and castles, and taking much wealth from them. At last he reached the city of Alcocer, supposed to be impregnable. For some months this city held out, and the Cid saw that it could not be taken by force, so calling into counsel his chief officers, they decided that strategy must be used. A plan was agreed upon, and in great haste the whole army retreated.

Seeing this the Moors rejoiced, and sallying forth from their stronghold, they went in pursuit.

The Cid, seeing the success of his ruse, directed his men to increase their speed, and soon they were moving like the wind, with the Moors following faster and faster.

When they had reached what the Cid considered to be a sufficient distance from the city, he led his company round in a half-circle,

thereby getting between the Moors and their base. Then, turning again, the pursued became the pursuers, and falling upon them with great fury, defeated them utterly.

Diaz then entered the city, taking possession of it in the name of his King, to whom he sent a share of the spoil, which was great.

Now the defeated Moors, seeing that they could not cope successfully with their valiant foe, sent to the King of Valencia for aid. He listened to their entreaties and added to their forces a strong army of well-mounted horsemen, who were given orders to capture the Cid.

So Alcocer was again besieged, and now the Campeador faced a more numerous foe than he had ever done before, so that the city was hemmed in from all directions.

The siege continued for nearly three months, and then food became scarce, and it could be seen that if they remained in the city they would die of starvation. Then the Champion addressed his followers, saying: "There is but little food left, and two sources remain open to us. Shall we remain here and starve, or

shall we dash boldly upon the enemy, and either win a mighty victory or die bravely in the attempt?"

To a man they decided upon a swift attack, so preparations were made, and the next morning the gates were opened, and with such rapidity did they dash upon the heathen that they swept through them like a whirlwind. And foremost in the fight was the Cid, with his green pennant flying, his sword darting here and there like lightning, and at every stroke a man fell to rise no more.

A wonderful victory was won. Of the Moorish leaders none remained, and great was the number of the slain, wounded and prisoners. A vast amount of booty was taken, consisting of gold, silver, jewels, arms and horses. Of this Diaz sent to Don Alphonso a goodly share.

Now Don Alphonso was very proud of his knightly vassal, who performed such valorous deeds, and gladly would he have pardoned him, only that he was ashamed. But he withdrew his ban from all who had accompanied the Cid, and returned to them their possessions, which had been forfeited.

The Champion dealt generously with the two money-lenders who had provided him with the means to provide for his company, and glad indeed was he to get back his two sand-filled chests, for this necessary deception had weighed heavily upon him. For some time he remained at Alcocer, governing the city wisely, and when at last he started out in search of further adventures, the inhabitants were filled with sorrow at his departure.

Since he had been crowned King of Spain, Don Alphonso had relied upon the sagacity of the Cid more than he even knew, and many times since he had been without the services of his wise counsellor had he bitterly regretted his absence. And now came a time when he needed help and advice such as he knew he could get only from Diaz de Bivar. So he swallowed his pride and sent a messenger to the Cid, begging him to return to Castile.

The Campeador replied that the only terms upon which he would return were that no noble should be sentenced to exile without being first permitted to defend himself, and also that if the decision be against him, he

THE CID AND KING ALPHONSO 25

then be allowed thirty days' grace in which to arrange his affairs.

To these terms Don Alphonso agreed right joyfully, and when the Cid and his followers returned to Castile, they were heartily welcomed by the people, who showed by their rejoicings how near to their hearts was the gallant Champion.

THE SIX BRAVE BURGHERS OF CALAIS

In the year 1346 King Edward III of England with his army laid siege to the town of Calais. He soon saw that the stronghold could not be taken by attack, and so he made plans to force its surrender by other means.

Around the town he built a large number of wooden houses, and prepared to wait until lack of food should cause the defenders to yield.

John de Vienne, a wise and prudent man, was the governor of Calais. It was not long before he saw that all but the warriors would have to leave, because provisions began to run low. So all those who could not fight were sent away.

As the town was surrounded by the English army, these old men, women and children had to pass through their lines. They told the

soldiers why they had left the city, and when the news was brought to King Edward he, a kind man at heart, directed that they should all be well fed, and each given a sum of money to help them on their way.

Almost a year passed, and the defenders suffered from hunger. The governor had about made up his mind to throw open the gates, sally forth upon the besiegers, and thus die fighting rather than starve. Several times had he sent word to King Phillip of their sorry plight, but no help came to them from him.

But in the latter part of July, 1347, the French army came in view, and how the brave defenders rejoiced when they saw their banners flying. They had no doubt now about their deliverance.

Time passed, and still King Phillip could not bring them relief, as no way was found to pierce the English lines.

One morning the brave inhabitants were horrified to see the French army retreating, and with them went their last hope. Their King had deserted them without striking a blow in their behalf.

Despair overtook them. No food was left. Horses, dogs, cats, and even all the rats and mice that could be found had been eaten. They could do nothing but submit.

So John de Vienne sent messengers to King Edward, telling them to make the best terms they could. But Edward was filled with anger that the siege had lasted so long, and because so many of his soldiers had been killed and much money spent. So he told the messengers that the surrender must be without conditions.

The governor pleaded for better terms, but the King would not listen until his own knights begged for mercy also. Then he yielded, and sent word to de Vienne that he must send six of the chief burghers of the city to him bare-headed, bare-footed, with ropes around their necks, and bearing in their hands the keys of the town. With these six men he would do what he wished, but the rest of the defenders should be free.

John de Vienne, upon receiving the message, went to the town square and summoned the people by having the bell of the city rung. When they were assembled, he told them the King's terms.

They despaired at the terms, for none thought that six men would freely give their lives, even to save the rest. But they were wrong. The first to offer himself was the wealthiest of them all, Eustace de St. Pierre, and it was not long before five others, all notable citizens, followed his lead.

So these six brave men, bare-headed, barefooted, with ropes around their necks, bearing in their hands the keys of the city, passed through the gates, and went fearlessly to their death.

The thought of so many of his own men who had lost their lives during the course of the siege had hardened Edward's heart, and when the six burghers were brought before him he ordered their instant execution.

The King's friend, Sir Walter de Manny, urged him to be merciful and spare the lives of these brave men. He reminded him how famed he was for his nobleness and love of justice, and begged him to do nothing that would tarnish his name.

But his anger was too great, and he replied to Sir Walter harshly, ordering him to send for the headsman immediately.

At this Philippa, his queen, fell at his feet, and with tears in her eyes begged him to have mercy, and for the love he had for her to grant the lives of these six men.

Then the King relented. His love for his wife was so great that he could not refuse her prayer. So he gave them into her hands, to do with as she pleased.

Joyously she thanked him. Directing the six burghers to be taken to her own house, she ordered that fresh clothes be given them, and saw that a meal such as they had not enjoyed for months was set before them. After this they returned in safety to their own people.

THE DARING OF BLACK AGNES

KING ROBERT BRUCE was dead and his little son David was crowned. The Earl of Moray was chosen to be Regent to rule the people until David should be old enough to take the reins of government himself.

The Earl was hated by the people on account of his cruelty, but it must be said in his favor that he was a just man, although he was hard and severe. He ruled for three years, and then one morning he was found dead, thought to have been poisoned.

The next Regent chosen proved to be a poor ruler, and soon many of the Scottish nobles rebelled, and put themselves under the leadership of Edward of Baliol, whose father, John Baliol, had been King before Robert Bruce.

And now there was strife in the land, for Baliol claimed the throne, and in this he was upheld by King Edward of England. So the country was divided into two factions, one for King David and the other for Edward Baliol. The two forces met in battle at Dupplin Moor, and there King David's army was completely routed.

After winning this victory Edward Baliol hastened to Scone, where he was crowned. And now Scotland had two Kings, but for the time being Baliol was triumphant, because after the battle David had fled to France.

Very soon, however, many of the Scottish barons who were still true to their young King, came together and chose another Regent to rule in David's name. They mustered an army, and fell upon Baliol's men with such suddenness that they in turn were utterly defeated, and many of their nobles slain. Baliol himself barely managed to escape, galloping away upon a horse that was not even saddled. So his victory at Dupplin Moor did not gain much for him, because in less than three months he was driven out of the country.

He fled to England, to whose king he had become vassal on being crowned. King Edward raised a large army, marched against the Scots, and defeated them at the battle of Halidon Hill.

But though defeated, Scotland did not give up. One of the great nobles on the side of King David was the Earl of March, and while he was away fighting the English besieged his castle of Dunbar.

His wife, the Countess of March, was a beautiful and resolute woman. She was called Black Agnes, on account of her black hair and dark eyes. Dunbar Castle was very important, and so the English were determined to take it. But Black Agnes was just as determined that they should not.

The besiegers used great engines which would throw immense stones against the walls of the castle with terrific force. But Dunbar Castle was built to withstand sieges, and little damage was done. Black Agnes was without fear, and at all times she was watching at the gate or on the ramparts, and when a stone would hit the walls she derisively ordered one of her maids to dust the spot with a white cloth, as though to show the besiegers that the dust they caused was not to her liking.

No place was too dangerous for her. She was here and there, giving praise and encouragement to the brave defenders, any of whom would have died for her. She lost no opportunity to laugh and jeer at the English, and to make fun of their efforts. And they, admiring Black Agnes for her courage and devotion, were too chivalrous at heart to use their best endeavors in attacking.

After several months of this fighting the defenders became short of food, and this was the only thing Black Agnes really feared. Dunbar Castle was built by the sea, but English ships were guarding this side so that assistance should not come by water.

But one dark night a brave fisherman managed to evade these vessels, and he brought very welcome relief to Black Agnes by adding fifty men to her garrison, and food in plenty.

Soon after this the English gave up the attack, and proud indeed were the Scots of their Black Agnes, and to this day is her courage extolled in poem and prose.

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

At the strange, picturesque little hill-town of Assisi, in sunny Italy, Saint Francis was born, in the year 1182. His father, Pietro Bernadone, was away in France on business at the time. His mother had named him Giovanni, but when Pietro returned home he called his little son Francesco (meaning "the Frenchman") because he had been very successful in selling his merchandise at a good profit in France. So he was always called Francesco, the English for which is Francis.

He grew up to be a boy full of fun and daring, and became the leader of his companions in the games and sports of which they were fond. Although he was full of mischief, and always in some sort of innocent trouble, he was a great favorite with everyone because he had a kind heart and never did a cruel

thing, but was always glad to help anyone he could.

His father was quite wealthy, and as he grew to manhood he mixed with the gayest young men of the town; and having all the money he wished to spend, he wore beautiful and costly clothes.

One day he became very sick, and for a long time it was thought that he would die, but in time he recovered. During this period of illness a great change came over him, for while lying on his bed he had thought much about the idle life he was leading, and it seemed to him that there must be real work for him to do. What that work would be, he looked for some sign to show him.

When he was quite well again he somehow did not care to waste his time leading his old gay life with his former companions. Instead, he took long walks across the plains or over the hills, and on one of these occasions a poor old beggar besought him for help.

The air was chilly, and in an instant he had wrapped his gay cloak about the shoulders of the shivering old man, whom he recognized as one who in his time had served his country faithfully as a soldier.

That night he had a dream in which he saw a great room filled with all kinds of weapons and flags, each of which had on it the sign of the Cross; and he heard a voice saying that these were reserved for the faithful soldiers who should fight manfully for the right under the banner of the Cross.

When Francis awoke, he took this to be a sign that he should become a soldier, so he left home with the intention of joining the army. But the next night, in a dream, he heard the voice say that service in the army of his country was not that which he should seek.

Much puzzled, Francis returned to Assisi, and when inside the town he went into the ruined church of St. Damiano. While there he heard a voice say: "Francis, repair my church."

Now the walls of this church were crumbling away, and naturally he thought that the voice meant that he should rebuild them. So, glad to find some real work to do, he hastened home, and taking some of his father's rich

merchandise to the market, sold it for a considerable sum of money.

This he took to the church and offered to the priest, telling him to rebuild the walls with it. But when Francis told him how he came by the money, the good priest refused to accept it, saying that he had done wrong to sell his father's goods without his permission.

And when Pietro found out what his son had done, he really was very angry. He did not object to supplying Francis with money for gay clothes, or for any reasonable extravagance in which he might wish to indulge, but he would give nothing for the repairing of an old church. So, in a rage, he locked Francis in a dark room, where he could meditate upon his offense, and the next day he drove him from the house with blows.

Having no place to go to, Francis went to the old priest, and in the ruined church he found shelter. In the meantime his father had gone to the bishop, and demanded that Francis be punished and made to return the money he had received from the sale of the merchandise. When the bishop spoke to Francis about it he promised to return the money, and in the market-place he took off his expensive clothes and standing there, clad only in a hair shirt, he gave to his father both clothes and money, and said, before the people: "Until now I have called Pietro Bernadone father, but after this time my only father will be 'my Father which is in Heaven.'"

The people were sorry for him, thinking that he had been badly treated, and a kindly laboring man gave him a rough cloak, for he was shivering with the cold.

After this Francis wandered all over the country, always seeking to do good. He nursed the poor lepers, and begged his bread. Often he was without food, but whatever he might have, others were always welcome to a share.

In the course of time, he returned to Assisi, and there he labored at repairing the ruined church with his own hands, and he found content and happiness in doing good work. And the more he thought of the uselessness of his former gay life, the greater became his desire

to work for the good of others, and being poor actually became a real source of joy to him. His Master had possessed no riches here, so why should he, and he was a great deal happier without them. No shoes nor stockings did he wear, and even the coarse cloak he wore had been given him in charity.

When his work on the church walls was finished, he again started wandering over the earth, and such was his enthusiasm that many others became as eager as he was to do good, and so was gathered together the band of men who became known as the "Little Poor Brothers." And in spite of their poverty they were always happy and cheerful. They made their home in a little church near Assisi, called Saint Mary of the Angels, which had been given them. But not often were many of them there, for their mission was to go out into the world to preach and help.

The spirit of love, so developed in Francis, kept him always gay and happy. He often went on long journeys by himself, and though he might be tired and hungry, he was never lonely, for this love attracted even birds and

animals. When he was walking the birds would fly down from among the trees and perch on his shoulder, not the least bit afraid of him. Sometimes he would stand still, and then they would gather round him. Then he would talk to them, and they would listen while he spoke.

There is a story told about Francis which shows that wild animals were just as fond of him as the birds were, and behaved toward him just as a pet dog would.

One day he reached a town where all the people were terrified by a very fierce wolf, who had become so bold in his depredations that the inhabitants were almost afraid to go out into the streets. The ferocious animal had even carried off to his lair some unfortunate children, and though the men hunted him he always escaped.

When this was told to Francis he at once said he would seek the wolf and show him how wrong he was. The people feared for him and did their best to turn him from his purpose. But he set out on his search, and presently the great wolf spied him and with

wide-open mouth sprang toward him, intending to tear him to pieces. Francis, unafraid, went forward to meet him, and said: "Brother Wolf, why have you harmed these people? I command you to do no more mischief."

It seems a marvelous thing, but as soon as the good man spoke the wolf stopped, and then went to Francis and fawned upon him like a dog. He rubbed his head against the Saint's habit and put his paw in his hand.

Francis then returned to the town, and the wolf trotted beside him. And after this the wolf, which had been so terribly fierce, became so tame that the children would play with him, and their parents were not the least bit afraid that they would be harmed.

This story may be true or may be only a legend, but it is certain that all living creatures knew that Francis loved them.

In the course of time many men were attracted by this devoted band of brothers, who taught that real happiness could not be had through riches, but only by being and doing good, and they became quite a large company. Francis sent them to many countries to teach

others the beauty of love and self-denial, but their home was always the little church near Assisi, Saint Mary of the Angels, to which the brothers returned after their journeyings.

Francis himself visited the land of the Saracens, where the Crusaders were fighting. Many people begged him not to go, as they were sure he would be put to death. But he had no fear, for his thought was to extend his teachings to the pagans. He was kindly received by the Sultan, who listened to what he had to say, but would not be convinced without a sign. Francis then asked that a great fire be made, and that he and the heathen priests should walk through it, and whoever came through unscathed should be the one whose teaching was to be followed.

But although the Sultan was willing, the pagan priests refused to agree to this, so Francis returned to Italy, having only the hope that he had sown seed which would bear fruit.

During this pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Francis endured many privations which affected his health. But still he continued his labors, not sparing himself in any way, and in time it was seen that his strength was failing.

High up in the Apennine Mountains was a spot which Francis loved, and here he had built a hut. To this place he went in the spring of the year, not long after his return. For some time he wandered about the woods, listening to the singing of his friends the birds, but he grew weaker and weaker, and at last some of the Little Poor Brothers came and carried him back to the church of Saint Mary of the Angels. He was to be with them but a short time now. His last words to his brothers bade them continue living as he had taught them to live, in love and charity with all; rich in good deeds, though in poverty and lowliness. On the evening of October 4, 1226, while the birds he loved were singing to him, his soul passed away, but his spirit still lives.

SAINT CUTHBERT

Who the parents of St. Cuthbert were is not known, but it is reasonably sure that he was born about the year 635 A.D. in either England or Ireland. Some have said that his mother was an Irish princess, upon whom calamity had fallen, and who was sold as a slave, but history does not tell us his birthplace, nor if he were born in a palace or a hovel.

It is recorded, however, that when he was eight years of age he was a poor orphan boy, living with a kindly old woman in a cottage on the hills of Lammermuir, in Scotland. The two loved one another very much, and till the day of her death St. Cuthbert never failed to do anything he could to help his old nurse.

As soon as he was old enough, Cuthbert became a shepherd boy, and tended his sheep on

the bleak and rather barren slope of Soutra Hill. He was fond of being out of doors and was always up very early in the morning, roaming over the hills, making friends with the birds and beasts, and it was generally dark when he returned to his home.

In the winter they were often snow-bound, and then he and his old nurse would sit by the fire, and she would tell him stories of the savage people who dwelt in the mountains to the north and to the south. She would also tell him about the kindly monks who lived in the monasteries, and while he loved to listen to tales of daring and danger, it was about the goodly deeds of the holy men that he used to dream.

Cuthbert grew up to be a strong, healthy boy, full of fun and fond of all sorts of games, especially those which required skill and courage, and he was well liked by his comrades. At times he would leave his playmates, throw himself down on the hillside, and dream of the future. Sometimes he wondered if he would be a soldier, and then his thoughts would wander to the monks who dwelt in the monastery of Melrose.

One day, when the boys were playing together, a little child of three, whom none of them knew, ran up to them. They stopped their game, and the child, looking at Cuthbert, said: "Oh, Cuthbert, why do you waste your time in idle games?"

The boys commenced playing again, and the child, seeing that no attention was paid to his words, threw himself upon the ground and sobbed.

Now, although the boys were rather rough, as most boys are, they felt sorry for the little stranger who cried so, and tried to comfort him, but the tears continued until Cuthbert stood over him, and then he said: "Oh, Cuthbert, it does not become you, whom the Lord hath consecrated, to behave so foolishly and sport with others in this way."

Cuthbert tried to discover from the child who he was, and who had sent him, but the tiny visitor suddenly arose and ran swiftly away, and none of them ever found out who he was or where he came from. The strange words of the little messenger made a great impression upon Cuthbert, who left his playmates and went back to his sheep. There he knelt down to pray, and he made up his mind that some day he would serve God as did the holy Abbot and the monks of Melrose.

One summer night, when out on the hill, he saw a light which grew brighter and brighter until it seemed to reach the skies, and down this pathway came white-robed angels on their way to earth. In a little while he saw them going upward, bearing in their arms a shining soul. He went toward the light, but it faded away.

When morning came Cuthbert heard that the Bishop of Lindisfarne had died during the night, and then he knew that it was for his soul the angels had come to earth.

This marvelous event caused the boy to go to Eata, the Abbot of the monastery at Melrose, and ask that he train him to be a monk.

The people at that time in the Border countries were very wild and always fighting, so Eata, in order to prove Cuthbert's mettle, sent him to serve as a soldier until the days should be more peaceful, and telling him that as a soldier he might serve God, and that after-

wards he could return and dwell in the monastery.

So over the rough mountain passes Cuthbert went, fighting for those who needed help, and doing good where he could. He learned to endure hardships and to be a faithful soldier.

One day, on the banks of the River Tyne, Cuthbert watched a raft loaded with logs, which some monks were steering to a monastery that was on the opposite side of the river. A violent storm suddenly arose and drove the raft down the river toward the sea.

Looking through the monastery windows, the monks saw the danger which threatened their comrades, and hastened to launch their boat in order that they might go to the rescue, but the current was too strong and the storm so fierce that all the efforts they made were in vain.

Very soon a crowd had gathered, and as they watched the raft they jeered at the monks who were trying so hard to save the lives of their brothers.

Cuthbert asked them why they scoffed at

the men in danger, and said it would be better to pray for their deliverance rather than mock at their peril.

But the people laughed at him, and said: "We care not whether they be saved or not, for they have taken away our gods from us."

Then Cuthbert fell on his knees and prayed that those in danger might not perish, and as he prayed the wind changed and blew the raft to the shore, and soon they were in safety on the other side.

Those who had scoffed and jeered were silent and ashamed now, and Cuthbert told them to praise and serve Him who had thus answered his prayer.

One blustery winter's day Cuthbert was riding over the frozen moor, when he was overtaken by a violent snow-storm, and soon he had to dismount and lead his horse, who was very weary. The snow drifted, and he feared they were lost. The storm seemed to gain in fury and he knew that if some shelter were not soon found they would both perish. His strength was almost gone when he saw before him an old, ramshackle hut, and he was just able to

push open the door and cross the threshold when he and his horse sank to the ground.

When his senses returned, Cuthbert's first thought was for his horse, and after a search he found a handful of dry grass on the floor of the hut, and with this he fed him. He himself was hungry, having fasted for nearly two days, but he knelt down and gave thanks for the shelter from the storm, and whilst on his knees, the horse nibbled at the thatched roof and pulled out of the straw a bundle wrapped in cloth.

Rising from his knees, Cuthbert saw the bundle, and on opening it found that it contained the food he so much needed. After sharing this with his horse, he again gave thanks and lay down to sleep.

During the following spring and summer Cuthbert met with many adventures, and in the fall he returned to Melrose, hoping that Eata would now receive him into the monastery.

The Abbot welcomed him as one who had been tried and not found wanting, and was glad to accept him as one of his monks.

In the monastery there was plenty of work for all to do, and among them none was more diligent than Cuthbert. Occasionally he was sent to the wild hill-men to preach the gospel, and so kind and sympathetic was he that they began to look forward to his visits and asked him to live with them. The Abbot, however, was impressed with his zeal, and sent him on longer journeys to the seacoast where the wild Picts dwelt, and with them he was very successful in his labors.

After some years of this loving service, Eata, who loved Cuthbert as a son, took him to the monastery of Ripon, in England, and there installed him as guest-master.

Once, during a very cold winter, a pilgrim came to the monastery, and, as was his custom, Cuthbert welcomed the traveler kindly, and after bathing his feet, placed food before him. Then he went to the kitchen for some newly baked bread, and when he returned with the loaves the stranger had disappeared. He hastened to the door, but although there was plenty of snow, no footmarks could be seen. This was very strange, and when Cuth-

bert returned to the room where he had so lately left his guest, he noticed that it was filled with a most delightful fragrance, and on the table lay three loaves, surpassing even lilies and roses in whiteness and perfume.

He was struck with awe, and said to himself: "It was an angel whom I received, and who has come to feed others, for he has brought such wonderful loaves as could not be made on this earth."

Some time after this the wild Northumberland coast was visited by a terrible plague, and the people in the villages round about were calling upon Eata and Cuthbert for help, so they returned to Melrose. They went among the sorely stricken folk, healing and cheering them, and presently Cuthbert, who would allow himself no rest and who was worn out with his labors, was taken by the dreaded pestilence.

He was taken to his cell in the monastery, and for many nights his brother monks prayed for the life of their beloved comrade, so saddened were they by his danger that they could not sleep, When Cuthbert was well enough to know of their devotion to him, he asked for his sandals and staff, and astonished them by rising from his bed. He told them that God would not refuse their entreaties.

His strength returned to him, but the Prior of Melrose, who had also been stricken by the plague, grew worse and died, and Cuthbert was made Prior in his place.

This newly acquired dignity brought additional responsibilities to Cuthbert, but he still found time to visit the lawless hill folk, and in time he showed them the wrongfulness of their cruel deeds, and did penance for their wickedness himself. They began to see how grieved the holy man was for their misdeeds, and became ashamed to sin and cause him such sorrow. You see, he was winning them to do right through love.

On one of his journeys Cuthbert lodged at a lonely monastery in Berwickshire, and when the monks had retired to their cells he went to the seashore, waded out into the cold water as far as he could, and there remained until daybreak, praising God for His goodness. When he returned to the shore he was almost frozen, and sank benumbed to the ground. Then some otters crept out from the rocks, came up to the holy man, licked his chilled feet, and warmed him with their bodies, so that he was soon able to get up and walk about, and he returned to the monastery.

Now, unknown to Cuthbert, one of the monks had followed him, and had seen what had happened to him, and the next day he confessed what he had done, and begged forgiveness. This Cuthbert gave him, on condition that he should not relate to anyone what had occurred. Then he sent him away in peace, with his blessing.

Since leaving his old home on the Lammermuir hills he had never forgotten his old nurse, and as often as he could found time to visit her, and on these occasions she always called together her neighbors to listen to the glad stories he had to tell.

During one of these visits the alarm of fire was raised; the wind was blowing strongly toward his old nurse's cottage, and it seemed certain that her home would soon be in flames.

He told her to fear not, and he fell upon the ground and prayed, and whilst he was praying the wind sank and the flames were quenched.

Eata was now Abbot of Lindisfarne, a very lonely island off the coast of Northumberland, and he sent for Cuthbert, whom he wished to make Prior of his monastery. Now at low tide one could walk from Lindisfarne to the mainland, so that it was not an island all of the time. Here Cuthbert came, in answer to Eata's call, and found a very unruly lot of monks. He made strict rules, and saw that they were obeyed, and at first he met with such resistance that it needed all his courage to stay the strife which his changes caused. But in time his patience and gentleness won, and the monks grew to love and reverence their new Prior.

His fame continued to spread, and all people of high and low degree came to him for counsel and comfort.

When Cuthbert was forty years of age he decided to live as a hermit on the desolate island of Farne. Here he built a hut, which he divided into two rooms, one in which to

sleep and the other for prayer. There was no water on the island, so he dug deep until he reached a spring, and he planted some corn and barley, which yielded just a large enough crop to keep him alive. Near the beach he built a house for such monks and pilgrims as might visit the island, and here, miraculously, water was found.

Cuthbert was now considered a saint, and so kind and gentle was he at all times that even the wild sea-birds became his friends and gathered around him as he knelt to pray on the rocks. And even now the sea-gulls on this lonely island are called, "The birds of St. Cuthbert."

Although he had gone to Farne in order that he might be alone with God, his fame had gone so over England and Scotland that many people who were sick or in trouble went to him for cure or advice, and none went away without benefit.

After living on this island for eight years, he was visited by the King of England, who was accompanied by many nobles and monks. They wished to make him Bishop of Lindis-

farne, and although he shrank from the honor, he finally acceeded to their request, and on the next Easter morning was consecrated in the city of York.

Although he was now a Bishop, Cuthbert's habits were as simple as before, and he spent his time in labor and prayer as he always had done.

After two years as Bishop of Lindisfarne, his strength began to fail and he knew that his work on earth was almost finished. So on Christmas day, 686 A.D., at the age of fifty years, he retired to the island of Farne. There the monks of Lindisfarne often visited him, and each time returned the more sorrowful, as they saw how much weaker he had become. They saw that he would soon be with the angels, and when he became too ill to leave his cot, two of the monks were given the privilege of serving him until the end.

At last, knowing that he had but a few minutes left, he said to the monks: "Have peace and divine charity ever amongst you." He then asked them to sing the midnight psalm, and ere it was ended his soul was carried to Paradise.

DAVID AND JONATHAN

A COMELY young man, a simple shepherd, stood in the midst of a great crowd which had gathered to see their King, Saul, pass by. In the chariot by the King's side was a handsome youth, strong both in face and form. This was Jonathan, the King's son and heir.

Jonathan was much beloved by the people; he was the greatest archer of his time and one of the best athletes in the country. At running and mountain climbing he had no equal, and besides these very desirable powers, he possessed a noble soul.

The shepherd was David, the youngest son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite, a man of considerable estate, whose business was the raising of sheep and cattle, and to David was given the care of his father's flock. He was one who would rather lead a simple life out of doors

among the mountains and streams, with his sheep and his harp for company, than be in the city where the jostling of people and the reveling oppressed him.

Now, in passing, the eyes of the prince and the shepherd met, and between them flashed a spirit of understanding, and from that hour there was love between them such as seldom has existed between men, a love which stood the test of time and as strong as life itself.

Still watching the disappearing chariot, David was interrupted by a servant who had been sent in search of him to tell him that he was wanted immediately at the house of his father, where the prophet, Samuel, awaited him. On reaching home, he found his father, brothers, and many neighbors gathered together, and a little apart was Samuel, who said, "Come hither, my son."

Then Samuel took a horn of oil and poured it over David's head, saying, "This is he whom the Lord hath chosen."

David's father was filled with surprise, and his brothers with envy, for the anointing with oil by the High Priest Samuel meant that David was destined to be the future King of Israel, and all were amazed that this young shepherd should be chosen for this exalted position.

David himself was too greatly moved for speech, and without a word he left the house and went directly to his favorite place in the mountain, where he spent the night alone with his harp, upon which he played with rapture.

A new spirit came upon him. It was not that he was exalted by the promise of the crown and the power that went with it, but that he, a humble shepherd, should be chosen for this great destiny filled him with awe, and during the hours of darkness he prayed for strength to guide him aright.

Now, although David was anointed as the future King of Israel, and his father and brothers knew that this would be so in time, yet he lived his life just as he had done before. He tended his flock and was still known to the world as a shepherd boy.

He was never lonely as he watched his sheep, for he possessed wonderful gifts of music and poetry, and would often put his thoughts into song; but best of all, he loved to play upon the harp, his skill with which had already won for him fame and friends.

About this time the kingdom of Israel was attacked by the Philistines, and with the army of the latter was a powerful giant, named Goliath of Gath. This giant was so proud of his mighty strength that he challenged any one of Saul's army to come forth and fight him in single combat, saying that the battle should be decided in this way. But none could be found brave enough to encounter him, and the whole army was filled with dismay.

Now David's elder brothers were with the Israelite forces, and Jesse, anxious to know how his sons fared, sent David to the camp to gain tidings of them. Thus it happened that he saw the giant Goliath and heard his scornful challenge, and was surprised to learn that even though the King had promised great rewards to whoever should kill the giant, none had dared to meet him.

And David, being quite fearless, said, "Who is this Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" He requested

to be taken to the tent of the King and said to him that he would go forth and fight with this Philistine.

Saul thought it foolish that a mere youth should attempt such a deed, but David said, "While guarding my flock I killed a lion, and at another time a bear, and do not fear that I shall fail to kill this giant."

Then the King put his own armor upon David and gave him his sword, but the young man found these too heavy, so put them aside, and taking his sling, chose five smooth pebbles and boldly went forth to meet the enemy.

When the big Philistine beheld the youth who had come out to fight him, he laughed at him scornfully, and said, "Come here and I will give your flesh to the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field!"

David answered, "I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, and this day will He deliver you into my hand, and I will kill you and take off your head that all may know there is a God in Israel."

Then the giant rushed toward David, who, placing a stone in his sling, aimed it with all

his force at the head of Goliath. It was a true shot, and the giant fell to the ground. Then David seized his enemy's sword and cut off his head. And when the Philistines saw that their mighty champion was dead, they were panic-stricken and fled, and the Israelites pursued them and won a great victory.

Saul and the people were loud in their praise and thanks to David, and when Jonathan, the King's son, who was with the army, stood before him, their love went out to one another, and they solemnly vowed eternal friendship.

After this, Saul would not allow David to return to his sheep, but made him dwell in his palace, gave him command of his army and bestowed upon him his daughter Michal in marriage. He won the confidence of the soldiers and gained many victories over the Philistines.

Thus David became powerful in the land and was the idol of the people, and the women on his return from battle sang:

> "Saul hath slain his thousands; And David his ten thousands!"

Saul, hearing of this singing, became very jealous, and feared lest the people should make David king in his place, thereby keeping the throne from his son, Jonathan. He began to brood over this and became subject to fits of despondency. David did his best to comfort him by his playing and singing, but he would not be soothed by music. His anger against David, knowing how the people loved him, became so great that one day in a great rage he threw his javelin at him.

David avoided the weapon and escaped. This made Saul the more jealous, and again he tried to kill him, but he fled to his own home, and there Saul sent messengers to kill him. Still he was saved from harm, for Michal his wife lowered him from the window, and he got safely away.

Jonathan was deeply grieved when he discovered his father's hatred for David, and told him how greatly he had loved and served him, and had defeated his enemies in battle. He knew that David was so loved by the people that they would certainly choose him for their next ruler, to his own exclusion, but the bond

of friendship between the two was too strong for anything to break and he had no thought of envy.

But Jonathan's pleadings were of no avail against his father's jealousy, and David was obliged to seek refuge among the hills, where his friends came to join him; and soon he found himself in command of several hundred men.

Jonathan, who knew where David was hiding, had arranged to let him know in a certain number of days if his father's wrath were appeased, or whether he still desired his death. He was to shoot three arrows, sending a lad to fetch them. If he said to the lad, "The arrows are on this side of thee; take them," then David would know that Saul intended him no harm. But if he said, "The arrows are beyond thee," then David would know that he was still in danger and must flee. As he had promised, Jonathan shot the arrows and said to the lad, "Is not the arrow beyond thee?" He also added, "Make haste and stay not." And when the lad had gone, David came out from his hiding place and he and Jonathan

said farewell to each other, and Jonathan returned to the palace.

Saul sent many large forces against David, but was unable to capture his rival, and for a long time David lived the life of an outlaw, his time being divided between fighting the Philistines and flying for safety from the pursuit of Saul.

More than once David could easily have taken Saul's life. On one occasion David and his men were hiding in a cave, when Saul and his army passed that way. Saul was weary and went into the cave to rest. He fell asleep, and David went to where he lay, cut off a piece of the King's robe, and then went into the depths of the cave.

When Saul awoke he went out. David followed him and, calling to him, showed the piece of cloth which he had cut from his robe, saying that he had no desire to take his life and was still his friend, although treated so unjustly.

Saul recognized David's generosity, and for the time being was ashamed of himself. They parted in a friendly manner, but Saul could not overcome his jealousy, and soon again sought to kill David.

At another time, while Saul lay sleeping at night, David came secretly and took the spear which lay by the King's pillow, leaving him unharmed. And again did Saul repent and promised to do David no harm.

Soon after this the Philistines, who had gathered together a great army, again attacked the Israelites and defeated them with great slaughter, and Jonathan was among the slain. Saul besought his armor-bearer to kill him, but he refused, whereupon he took his sword and fell upon it, and so died.

A few days after the battle the news of the death of Saul and Jonathan was brought to David, who rent his clothes and mourned, saying:

"How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul.

"O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan. Very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." After this defeat the tribe of Judah anointed David as their King, and under his rule the country was freed from enemies and also conquered other lands, making Israel to be spoken of everywhere with honor and respect.

DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN

It is often the fate of those occupying high positions to be the object of envy and hatred on the part of others, and so it was with Daniel. After the conquest of Chaldea by the Persians, Darius, their King, recognizing the ability and uprightness of Daniel, made him his chief adviser.

Now Daniel was without fear, and on many occasions had warned the previous kings, Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, as well as their courtiers, that their evil ways would bring them great punishment; but they refused to heed his good advice, and the result was the defeat and ruin of their country.

Darius was a wise ruler, and immediately he set about restoring order among his new subjects. He appointed over one hundred provincial governors, and these were under three presidents, of whom Daniel was the chief, so that, next to the King, he held the highest office in the land.

These governors and presidents, nearly all of whom were Medes or Persians, were very jealous of Daniel on account of the honor Darius had done him, and they sought to injure him in every possible way. They watched him day and night in order that they might find some charge to bring against him, but in all his dealings he was so honest and upright that all their efforts were without avail, and nothing could be found to harm him in the sight of Darius.

At last they found a plan by means of which he could be trapped on account of his religion. They assembled together before the King and said to him:

"King Darius, live forever. The presidents and governors of the kingdom desire to establish a royal statute, and make a decree that whosoever shall ask a petition of any god or man within a space of thirty days save of thee, O King, he shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, therefore, establish the decree, and sign

the writing that it be changed not, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not."

Having no suspicion of the plot against Daniel, the King signed the decree, and it went forth to all the people.

Of course, Daniel at once saw what his enemies intended, but every day he offered up his prayers to God as he had always done, without fear of what the consequence might be to him; and very soon the spies who were watching him brought their reports to the other presidents and governors.

Then they went to the King, and said to him:

"Have you not signed a decree that any one asking a petition of any god or man within thirty days save of you, O King, shall be cast into the den of lions?"

"I have," said the King, "and according to the law of the Medes and Persians, this cannot be changed."

Then they said to him:

"O King, Daniel has many times disregarded this decree. Three times every day does he make prayers unto his God."

Darius was greatly troubled. He had learned to love Daniel, and knew how necessary he was to him, and to the country he had conquered. He tried hard to find a way out of the difficulty, but although, too late, he saw why the counsellors had asked that the decree be signed, nothing he could do would save the chief president. He therefore ordered Daniel to be brought before him and commanded that he be cast into the den of lions; but he said, "Your God, whom you serve so faithfully, will deliver you."

Then the sentence was carried out; a stone was rolled to the mouth of the den, and it was sealed with the King's signet.

Darius in great sorrow returned to his palace, but there was no rest for him that night. Early in the morning he went to the mouth of the den, and in a voice which trembled with doubt and fear, he cried:

"O Daniel, is your God, to whom you are so faithful, able to deliver you from the lions?"

Then was he overjoyed, for Daniel replied: "O King, live forever. My God has sent

His angel and shut the lions' mouths, and they have not hurt me."

The King at once had the seal broken and the stone removed, and Daniel came out of the den unharmed.

Then Darius ordered that all those who had accused Daniel be cast to the lions, and he issued a decree that in every part of his dominions all men should bow down and worship the God of Daniel.

MAGNA CARTA

OF all the Kings of England, John was the most generally hated. He was cruel and treacherous, and never could he be trusted to keep his word. And yet, strange though it may appear, the very baseness of this vicious monarch was the means of giving to every freeman of England absolutely security, both in person and property, from any damaging process other than through the law of the land.

Before he was King he plotted against his brother, Richard the Lion Hearted, who forgave him and treated him with the greatest generosity. When Richard received his death wound before the castle of Châluz, John rejoiced, for he then had his heart's desire, and was crowned King of England on Ascension Day, 1199.

He at once began to destroy the great system of government which his father, King Henry II, had founded, and he placed himself above all laws, making his people obey only his own cruel and despotic will.

Although it has never been proved, it has always been accepted as a truth that with his own hand he killed his young nephew, Arthur of Brittany, who might have been a claimant for the crown. But the untimely end of the young duke was the beginning of trouble for King John, for through this he lost the rich provinces of Normandy, Anjou, Poitou, and Guienne, which were taken by King Philip of France.

Many of the English barons had possessions in Normandy, and it was now necessary for them to decide whether they should owe allegiance to England or France. With very few exceptions they remained in England.

And now John, having no foreign dominions to govern, had to stay at home. But the loss of this territory and the humiliation he suffered through it made him the more harsh, if possible, toward his English subjects, and

his innumerable tyrannies made his own people his enemies.

However, there was still some civil administration, at the head of which was a faithful justiciar, named Fitz-Peter. But in the year 1213 this able man died, and now the last check upon John's tyranny was removed. With much energy he planned to recover his lost provinces, and to this end he formed an alliance with the Emperor Otto IV of Germany.

But he received little support from his own country, for most of the barons refused to serve abroad, so that most of the fighting which followed was between the Germans and their Flemish allies and the French. A great battle was fought in the month of July, 1214, at Bouvines, in which the French utterly defeated their enemies, and thus John's scheme for the re-conquest of his lost dominions failed.

And now began the series of events which led to the Great Charter. Archbishop Langton held up the charter of Henry I as a basis upon which to form a more liberal one. A

st. Edmunds, at which they declared themselves against the King. The barons also received the help of the clergy and the people of London, so that in England John had few but his foreign hirelings with him.

This great meeting was a very solemn affair. It was held in the church of Bury St. Edmunds, and each baron, in the order of his rank, marched up to the altar and swore that if John refused to accept their charter he would join in rebellion against him.

The war in France, which had ended in the defeat of the allies, had cost England a great deal of money, because many foreign soldiers, or mercenaries, were hired to fight. This not only increased John's unpopularity, but the barons saw that his failure and want of funds had driven him into a corner, so that he would have to come to terms with them.

When he returned to England, in the month of January, 1215, they laid the matter before the King, but he would not listen to them. They waited until Easter, and then gathered together a great armed force and sent a mes-

sage to John, asking him if he would grant their demands. He again refused to pay any attention to them, other than to say that there was no reason in their request, and that they might just as well ask for his kingdom.

The barons had now reached the limit of their patience, so their army, under the leader-ship of Lord Robert Fitz-Walter, besieged the King's castle of Nottingham. They failed to take the castle, however, and after a time raised the siege and marched to London, where they were welcomed.

And not only the Londoners, but most of the influential people of the country were with them. By threats the rest of John's adherents were won over, and this meant bitter humiliation for the King, for now he had to bow to the will of the people.

A meeting between the King and the barons was arranged to take place on June 15, 1215, at Runnymede, a meadow between Stains and Windsor. There the great Magna Carta was handed to John, and to this his seal was affixed. The Keeper of the Great Seal was Lord Hugh Neville, and he was the first of

the barons to sign. Each of the others followed him in turn.

In addition to this, so little was the King trusted, a pledge was required that the provisions of the charter should be kept, and twenty-five barons were nominated to see that he fulfilled his part of the covenant.

So the great event was over. During the historic scene, John had managed to control himself. Now he mounted his horse and, accompanied by a few knights, rode to Windsor, where he went at once to his apartments. There he raged like a madman, and none dared speak to him. He cried aloud in his wrath that he had twenty-five over-lords, and he tore to pieces the hangings of the room, as he would have liked to tear the great document to which he had been forced to set his seal.

This great charter marked an epoch in the history of England. It was not that it brought into existence new laws, for the same had, in a way, been vaguely accepted, but never before had they actually been put in writing. The great point now was that the ruler him-

self should keep the law, and to show that he was just as amenable to it as any of his subjects. And this was the birth of political liberty.

Before this time taxes had been levied just as the King saw fit. If he wanted money for any reason at all, the people had to find it, and they were powerless to resist. In consequence they were almost ruined.

Often men had been imprisoned without trial. This could be done no more, for the charter said that "No freeman should be seized, imprisoned, dispossessed or outlawed in any way other than by the legal judgment of his peers and by the law of the land, and to no man may justice be delayed or denied."

King John died the year following the signing of the Great Charter, and he passed away regretted by none of his subjects. While he was a man who possessed considerable ability, he lacked force and stability of purpose. He was tyrannical, treacherous, passionate, careless of his public duties, and one of the worst of England's kings. And yet an all-wise Providence ordained that through these bad

qualities the nation should benefit to so great an extent, because they compelled the barons, people and clergy to make common cause against him.

Magna Carta was the result of the first united action of England as a nation, and the foundation of the present constitution.

WALTER RALEIGH AND HIS CLOAK

THE Earl of Sussex and the Earl of Leicester were rivals for the favor of Queen Elizabeth. Both were well-endowed with riches and good looks, and the race between them up to the present had been very even. But now the Earl of Sussex was lying at Say's Court, near London, very ill with fever, which was not helped by the knowledge that his enforced absence from court would be made good use of by his antagonist.

Among the retainers of the Earl of Sussex was a handsome young man named Walter Raleigh. Although not much more than twenty years of age, he was already well-known for his military prowess, and he had picked up many of the courtly arts practised by the gallants of France and Spain, with which countries he was well acquainted.

He was dressed in the height of fashion, and presented a graceful and striking appearance.

The Earl's physician had given him a special potion, and had instructed Walter, who was then on duty, that on no account should his master be disturbed, for if he were awakened the result might be his death. It was not long after this that a clamor at the gate announced the arrival of some dignitary, and on inquiry Walter found that the Queen had sent her own doctor to advise upon the condition of the noble Earl.

The young man refused him admittance, and the noted physician went away in high dudgeon, feeling that a slight had been put upon both himself and his royal mistress.

Walter reported the circumstance to the Earl's secretary, who was filled with dismay at the indignity put upon her Majesty's leech. "The Queen," said he, "showed my lord a mark of especial favor in sending to him her own learned physician, and now, whether he live or die, he will receive her good-will no more. And who is to bear the blame?"

Raleigh said that as he had done the wrong

the punishment must fall upon him. He also added that he would commit the same offense again, if necessary for his lordship's health.

He imagined that this event meant the end to his hopes and dreams of court favor, and his thoughts turned toward the colony of America, across the sea, where riches awaited the bold hearts who went in search of them. He did not regret having closed the door to the Queen's doctor, knowing that he would have aroused his master from sleep, and that the consequence might have been disastrous. It was really a loving service that he had rendered.

Late in the morning he learned that the Earl had awakened, much improved in health, the special draught given by his physician having well nigh cured him. Very soon he was summoned to report upon the happenings of the night, so he made his way to his master's chamber.

On hearing of the repulse to the Queen's messenger by his young follower, his lordship laughed heartily. But soon he saw that it was a serious matter, to be dealt with at once. He

therefore ordered Blount, his master of the horse, together with young Raleigh and another of his officers, to take boat immediately and go down the river to Greenwich, where the Queen was, and to express to her Majesty his grateful thanks for her kindness, and also to explain why he had been unable to use the valuable services of her learned doctor.

Now Walter prided himself upon his appearance, and always dressed, when abroad, in the height of fashion. His companions were less particular in this respect, and were rather disgusted when he bade them wait while he went to fetch a cloak which he had but just received from the tailor, saying that if he were going to court, he would wear his best.

Soon they were being rowed down the beautiful Thames, and on nearing the landing at Greenwich saw the royal barge, evidently in readiness for a journey, as it was manned by the Queen's watermen, and the route from the palace gate to the waterside was lined by the yeomen of the guard.

As her Majesty was about to leave the palace it could be seen that this was no time to

secure an audience with her, so Blount suggested that they return at once to Say's Court, but this Walter refused to do until their royal mistress had embarked. The boat was therefore moored at a near-by landing-place, where they went ashore and walked in the direction of the palace gate. Admission was refused them by the porters, even though they said they were from the Earl of Sussex.

Blount again tried to persuade Walter to return, but to this Walter would not listen until he had at least made an effort to deliver the message.

And now the gate was opened. The ushers came first to see that a path was clear for her Majesty, who soon followed, surrounded by a crowd of courtiers.

Elizabeth, while not beautiful, was very attractive in face and figure, and it could be seen that she was born to rule. She carried herself proudly, as became a daughter of the House of Tudor.

This was the first opportunity young Raleigh had had to see his sovereign, and he wished to obtain as clear a view of her as possible. He pressed forward in advance of his companions, and the ushers, noting his rich attire and noble bearing, concluded that he was connected with the court, and allowed him to approach nearer to the Queen than was usually permitted. He fixed his gaze eagerly upon her, and she in turn glanced at the handsome youth, now bowing respectfully and admiringly before her, bonnet in hand.

During the previous night there had been a heavy rain, and directly in the path of the Queen was a small pool of muddy water, at which she hesitated. Walter possessed a quick wit, and taking off his new cloak, laid it across the spot, thus enabling her to cross dry-shod.

Elizabeth said not a word, but looked at the young man and bowed her head as she passed. Her face, however, showed how this act of gallantry pleased her.

Walter's friends made fun over the gay cloak, now so dirty, but he picked it up and folded it, saying that it should never be brushed while in his possession.

At this moment they were interrupted by one of the ushers, who requested Walter to follow him at once, saying that the order came directly from her Majesty. He obeyed the command, and his two friends, quite overcome with astonishment, proceeded on their way to Say's Court to lay their report before the Earl of Sussex.

The young gallant was taken to the royal barge, and with the mud-bespattered cloak upon his arm was led before the Queen, who thanked him warmly for his unusual act of courtesy, and requested the privilege of replacing the soiled garment with a new one.

Walter, in no way abashed by being in the presence of royalty, assured her Majesty that he was already honored by the service to which the mantle had been put, and that he would always prize it as his greatest possession.

This reply evidently was pleasing to the Queen, who asked him his name and station.

"Walter Raleigh, your Majesty," said he, "a gentleman attached to the household of the Earl of Sussex, and sent here by him with a message to your Grace."

At this Elizabeth frowned. "The one who

himself pays so little regard to messages and messengers," said she. "Only this morning we sent our own physician to inquire after his lordship's health, and to use his skill toward his recovery, but he was refused admittance to Say's Court, although demanding it in our name. For this we will accept no excuse."

This speech boded evil things in store for the Earl, but upon Walter, to whom it was addressed, it had no effect. He assured the Queen that the message with which he was charged contained no apology. "The noble Earl," he said, "was under the influence of a sleeping potion when your gracious message was received, and he knew nothing of the rebuff to your Majesty's physician until after he awoke this morning. His own man of medicine had issued instructions that he should on no account be disturbed until the effect of the potion had worn off, as in that case his life might be endangered. I, Madam, am the culprit, and upon me should your Majesty's displeasure fall. The charge of the gate was mine when your kind message was received, and upon my own responsibility, having his lordship's health in mind, did I refuse admission. And my lord has sent me, as the offender, to accept what punishment your Grace may see fit to bestow."

"And so it was you that repelled my messenger and physician from Say's Court," said the Queen. "For one who seems so devoted to his sovereign you showed much boldness. Can you give me good reason for this?"

"Madam," replied Walter, "the physician is for the time being the sovereign of his patient. My lord was under the dominion of a leech who had greatly benefited him, and who had ordered that his patient be not disturbed on peril of his life. This morning he awoke much refreshed and strengthened, having enjoyed the only sleep he has had for some days."

The Queen now dropped her severe expression, which had, indeed, been only a mask, and without disguising her satisfaction, said: "By my word, I am glad to hear he is better. And as we are now upon the river, we will change our purpose of going to the city, and instead will surprise the sick Earl with a visit. He

doubtless fears our displeasure, and it were an act of charity to tell him that he has been honestly cleared by the frankness of this young man."

The royal barge was turned to the direction of Say's Court, and there the Earl of Sussex personally received the good wishes of his sovereign. He was also informed that Walter Raleigh would henceforth belong to the Queen's own household.

DIETRICH

DIETMAR was a powerful King and ruled at Berne with a strong hand. He was a great warrior and terrible in battle; but at home he was kind and gentle to all, especially to his wife, a daughter of the King of Denmark, and to his son Dietrich, who was the joy of his heart.

Dietrich had long fair hair which fell over his shoulders in heavy curls. He was tall and slender, but very strong, and when he was twelve years of age he had the might of a great warrior. He was good to look upon except when he was angry, and then he was terrible. It was seen that he was destined to become a great hero.

When he was five years old, Hildebrand, Count of Garden, visited Dietmar's court. Hildebrand was not only a noted soldier, but a wise man as well, and the King was so pleased with his guest that he appointed him to be his son's governor and tutor. And in this way there sprang up a friendship between teacher and pupil that lasted until they were parted by death.

Now it happened that Dietmar's country was infested by a giant and giantess, who slew and plundered the people. They were so tremendously strong that no one could resist them. Force after force was sent against them, but without avail, as they were so cunning that they were always in some safe hiding place when too numerous a party sought them. This ill-success worried not only the King, but Dietrich and his governor, and at last the two determined to capture the giants themselves, even though they might spend years in search of them.

So they set out in pursuit, and wandered over mountains and through valleys without sight of them. But one day, when they were hunting with hawks and hounds, they came to a large forest in the midst of which was a meadow, which promised well for game.

Uncoupling the hounds, they rode one to the right and the other to the left of the meadow, each holding his weapons in readiness for use. As Dietrich advanced a dwarf attempted to cross in front of him. Stooping from his horse, he caught hold of the little man and put him before him. The prisoner squealed so loudly that he attracted the attention of Hildebrand, who galloped across the meadow to find out the reason for the noise.

On seeing the dwarf, he said to Dietrich: "Hold the rascal tight, for he is Elbegast, the prince of thieves, and surely a friend of the rascals we seek."

At this the dwarf shrieked louder than before, and said that far from being their friend he desired to be revenged for wrongs the giant and his sister had done him. He said that they had even forced him to forge for them the great sword Nagelring, and the strong helmet Hildegrim; and that they had made him show them how to reach their victims by secret ways which only he himself knew. If the two warriors wished to capture or kill the giants, he would help them.

Then the dwarf was released, upon which he drew a long breath, and said: "If I desired to escape from you now, you could not catch me, but I wish to be freed from the power of the giants, and so will serve you faithfully. Meet me here at daybreak to-morrow, and I will give you the sword Nagelring, without which you will be helpless against them. I will steal it from them just as sure as I am the prince of thieves. And I will guide you so that you may track them to their hiding place in the mountain, and if you slay them you will be rewarded with much booty."

At this the dwarf disappeared. The next morning, before daybreak, the prince and Hildebrand were at the place appointed for the meeting, even though they agreed that the thievish Elbegast was not to be trusted. But as they were speaking, they heard a clanking sound, and looking about, saw the dwarf coming toward them, dragging a huge sword. This Dietrich seized with a cry of joy, and unsheathing it, swung it in the air.

"With this you have the strength of twelve men," cried Elbegast, "and can fight the monsters on equal terms. Now look carefully and you will see distinctly the marks of their shoes on the grass. Follow the tracks and they will lead you directly to the entrance of their cave. And now I will leave you."

When he had gone the two followed the tracks pointed out by the dwarf, and soon they reached a high cliff, but could find no opening. Here and there was a crack, but none large enough for a full-sized man to enter. Hildebrand thought that a piece of rock might be used as a door, and he tried to loosen any piece that projected far enough for him to catch hold of. And his efforts were not lost, for presently a great block stirred beneath his hands and fell with a great noise to the valley below.

A deep cavern was now exposed to view, and into this the sunlight penetrated. In the rear of the cave a large fire was burning, and close to the flames Grim, the giant, was seen lying on a bed of skins.

The noise of the falling rock awakened him, and seeing the warriors approach, he looked about for his sword. Not finding it, he seized

a burning log, and rushed upon Dietrich, who was in the lead. He aimed fierce blows at him, but the young warrior's nimbleness enabled him to escape them. The prince had insisted upon attacking the giant alone, and indeed Hildebrand was very busy himself, for the giantess now appeared and caught him with such a deadly grip that he could scarcely breathe. He struggled hard, but could not free himself, and at last he was thrown upon his back, and the giantess pressed his hands and arms so tightly that the blood came from under his nails.

Hildebrand called to his companion for aid, and Dietrich, seeing his friend's danger, dodged the giant's weapon and, holding his great sword with both hands, dealt him such a blow that the monster's head was split in twain. Then he turned upon the giantess, and in a few minutes slew her too.

His governor staggered to his feet and said that after this he would look upon the prince as his master instead of his pupil, because the enormous woman had been a more formidable foe than any he had ever met before. In the cave they found a great store of treasure, which they took to Berne.

King Dietmar rejoiced in his son's victory, which made Dietrich famous. But soon after this event the King died, and Dietrich reigned in his place. In Hildebrand's charge he gave his younger brother Diether, begging his friend to teach the boy to be a worthy son of his father.

This Hildebrand did, and the boy grew up to love what was good and true, and to be as brave as was his brother Dietrich.

WILLIAM, COUNT OF ORANGE

BEING a man of great valor and good deeds, Count Henry of Narbonne well deserved the high esteem in which he was held by Charlemagne, Emperor of the Franks. He and his wife were blessed with many children, and when a time of peace had come he withdrew to his castle in order that he might devote himself to the education of his sons and daughters.

When the sons, of whom there were seven, had reached man's estate, the Count said that he wished them to listen carefully to a story he had to tell.

"Once, many years ago," he said, "after a long and hard fight, I sank, wounded and exhausted, on the field of battle. Several of the enemy were about to slay me as I lay on the ground helpless, when a faithful squire

defended me at the risk of his life. Help arrived just as he fell by my side, sorely wounded.

"Health returned to me, but he grew weaker and weaker each day. He had no fear of death, but the fate of his little son caused him much worry, for, as his wife had died some time before, the little boy would be left an orphan.

"I promised him that I would be a father to the boy, and that if he should prove worthy I would make him my heir, even though I should have children of my own. He grew up to be a true knight and gallant warrior and I am proud of him.

"Now, my sons, I wish you to say whether I shall keep my word to the faithful friend who lost his life through defending me, or if you desire that I divide my estate between you?"

The sons replied that under no consideration would they have their father break his promised word; rather than that, they would beg their bread.

Then cried the Countess: "All that I have

is yours, my children. And you have inherited from your father that which is priceless—courage, knightliness, and good faith to God and man."

"Then, my dear sons," said the Count, "you may go to the Emperor's court, and if you are true to the lessons you have learned, success will be yours."

So the young warriors went to Charlemagne, who received them well, for the sake of his old friend, Count Henry. And soon he learned to love them, too.

Not long after this the Moors invaded Gascony, and the young men acquitted themselves so bravely that upon their return the Emperor knighted them and gave them fiefs. William, the oldest, was made governor of the southern coast of France, and there he proved a vigilant warden, holding the land safely against the attacks of the Saracens.

About this time Charlemagne the Great died, and he was succeeded by his son Ludwig. The new ruler made it his custom to visit all parts of his country, to see for himself what the conditions were. Among other

places, he visited the castle in which William lived with his youngest sister. This maiden was so very charming that the Emperor fell in love with and married her.

For some years there was peace in the land, but suddenly they were invaded by the Saracens under the powerful Emirs Tureman and Balikan. Emperor Ludwig and Count William led the army against their old enemy, and in one of the battles William was captured and taken as a prisoner to Valencia by the Emir Tibalt.

At Valencia William was loaded with chains and imprisoned in a dismal dungeon, and there the Emir's sister, Arabella, had charge of him, while her brother was away fighting. Tibalt had directed her to feed the prisoner on bread and water, and on no account was she to allow his chains to be removed. He thought that this treatment might cause him to embrace the Mohammedan religion rather than continue to suffer ignominy.

For a time Arabella obeyed her brother's orders, and did not even visit her prisoner, but presently she became curious about him, and

with her guard went to his cell. There she saw what a kindly, gentle knight he was, and she felt sorry for his misfortune. As the weeks passed, Arabella tried to teach him her religion, and reminded him that if he did so he would be freed from his chains. William, in his turn, told her about his religion of love and mercy, and at last she confessed that she wished to become a Christian. And now love had come to them both, and so with the help of a faithful old servant, Arabella hired a vessel, freed the Count, and they determined to fly to the court of Ludwig.

But when the captain of the ship learned that he was to steer for the coast of France, he absolutely refused. At this William threw him overboard, and then, with drawn sword, forced the crew to obey his orders.

Now just at this time Tibalt returned, and the captain, who had swum ashore, told him what had happened. Without loss of time the Emir embarked on another ship and started in pursuit of the fugitives, but he was unable to overtake them.

William and Arabella safely reached the

court of Ludwig, and he and his Queen received them with kindness. But before long the admiration excited by Arabella's great beauty aroused the Queen's jealousy, and she began to look upon them both with disfavor.

As soon as possible, Arabella was baptised and received into the Christian church, and her name was changed to Gyburg. Then she and Count William were married by Pope Leo, in the presence of Emperor Ludwig, and after the ceremony they went to Orange, the home of the Count.

For some years they lived happily and quietly at Orange, and having no children of their own, William adopted the son of one of his sisters who had died, and made him his heir. The boy's name was Vivian, and much love and care were bestowed upon his education. He grew up to be a brave and knightly youth, and while still in early manhood he won glory on the field of battle.

The Moors again invaded France in vast numbers. Soon they overran the province of Aquitaine, and there was real fear that they would conquer the whole country. Count William, with his adopted son and all the soldiers he could gather together, hastened against the enemy. The two armies met on the plain of Alicon, and, with loud cries of "Machmet!" from the Saracens and "Montjoie, St. Denis!" from the Franks, a terrible battle commenced.

For a whole day the strife raged, and young Vivian acquitted himself as a hero. He proved his courage, but when the dusk began to fall he received a mortal wound.

He became unconscious, and when he came to himself he found that he was lying on the field of battle, surrounded by the slain. He was parched with thirst, and prayed for water. His prayer was answered, for an angel appeared and guided him to the side of a brook, where he was able to quench his thirst. Before leaving him, the angel said: "The town of Orange and the Countess Gyburg are in peril."

When young Vivian heard this he fainted, and it was in this condition that Count William, who had sought him all over the field of carnage, found him.

With difficulty his father revived him, but

he retained just enough strength to repeat the angel's warning, and then he fell back, dead.

And now the Count had a hard task before him. In searching for Vivian he had lost track of his men. The battle was over, but without assistance how was it possible for him to save Gyburg and Orange? And then his horse was wounded, so that he had to lead it. The way to Orange was long and toilsome, but without loss of time he set out on his journey on foot.

He traveled in this way all through the night, and early in the morning he encountered a Moorish officer and several soldiers. Without hesitation he attacked them and killed their leader, and the rest, surprised and naturally thinking him to be in advance of others, turned and fled. Being alone, he put the dress of the slain Moor over his armor, and mounting his horse continued on his journey to Orange, which place he reached in safety, followed by his faithful wounded war horse.

He was just in time to prepare the castle for defense, for soon the enemy arrived and tried to take it by storm. In this they were unsuccessful, so they determined to starve the garrison. After a while the besieged began to suffer from want of food, and in time they were reduced to such straits that William made up his mind to slip through the hostile lines and bring back reinforcements and provisions. So he donned the uniform he had taken from the body of the Moor, and making his wife and officers swear to defend the fortress to the last extremity, he started on his dangerous undertaking.

He succeeded in making his way through the enemy's lines, and reached the city of Orleans. There the commander of the guard ordered that he be executed, believing him to be a Saracen on account of his garb. The Count protested that he was a Frank, and gave his name and rank, but the officer was not convinced until the governor of the city, who was his brother, arrived at the head of an armed force, and took him to his palace. There William would partake of nothing but bread and water, as he refused to feast while his wife and men were almost starving. He remained with his brother for a few hours to rest, and then went on his way to the Emperor's court.

Here he was received but coldly, especially by his sister, who was still jealous of Gyburg's beauty. She even intimated that the Count's wife had instigated the invasion by the Saracens, and the Emperor seemed unwilling to send reinforcements to Orange.

So precious time was wasted, but mean-while word reached the aged Count of Nar-bonne that William sought for help, so he, his sons and many other knights came to offer assistance. When they heard of the ill-treatment William had received at the hands of the Emperor, he went to him and threatened that he and the other knights would rebel against him if he refused to support his vassals. And he told his daughter very plainly what he thought of her ridiculous rancour and bade her do her duty. His outspoken language had good effect, and orders were at once given that ample succor be sent to Orange. In a very short time an army was ready.

At the approach of the Frankish host the Saracens fled in haste, leaving behind their tents and provisions, which William at once seized for the use of the soldiers.

Among the menials at the castle was a strapping young fellow, a Moor by birth, who had been captured from the Moors when a child and presented to William. Many thought this young man to be half-witted, and called him "Jack the Dunce," but the Count was sure he was of noble birth. At one time he had had the good fortune to save Ludwig's daughter Alice from the attack of a wolf, when she desired to reward him he merely requested that she keep the matter secret, and this she did. But when he went with the soldiers to fight against the Moors she sought him out and gave him a ring as a farewell gift.

After the raising of the siege of Orange, William's attention was somehow drawn to this young man, and noticing the masterly manner in which he handled his only weapon, a quarter-staff, he gave him his freedom and requested the Lady Gyburg to provide him with the requisites of a warrior. The youth was grateful for the kindness shown him, and swore to serve the Count faithfully to the

death. And as he turned away the Countess heard him say, as though to himself: "Now I may strive for her I love, and can show my royal lineage. Terramer, you have forgotten your son, who has become a loyal Frank, able and willing to fight for his new country."

Gyburg called him back hastily and requested him to tell his story. This revealed the fact that he was her own brother, Rennwart, and there was a joyful recognition. After this he joined the force that marched against the Moors, but though clad in the armor of a knight, he still carried the quarter-staff to which he was so well-used.

In the battle which followed Rennwart fully justified the Count's trust, and when he returned he brought with him several prisoners of high degree, among whom was the Moorish chief Terramer.

The Moors were utterly defeated, and Terramer was wounded and broken-hearted. But William and Gyburg were so kind and considerate toward him that both his body and spirit began to mend, and soon he made friends with them. And when he found that

his captor was the son whom he had mourned as dead, he was comforted.

When William and Gyburg returned to Orleans with the victorious army, they were well received, and the Count was rewarded by being created Duke of Aquitaine, and Rennwart was made Count of Nismes.

The Emperor gave a great feast for the menat-arms, and a banquet for the nobles, and while the heroes were enjoying these good things, Rennwart sat silent and absorbed until the Princess Alice approached. Then his face lighted up and the royal maiden blushed. The Empress noticed this and wondered if they had met before, and questioned Gyburg about it. Then she learned Rennwart's story, and heard that he and Alice had loved one another since the day when he, in the guise of a menial, had saved the Princess from the wolf. A few days after this the two young people were betrothed.

William governed the people of Aquitaine and Orange wisely and justly, and in his rule he received the help of the Lady Gyburg. They built churches and almshouses and in the mountains they established places of refuge for belated wanderers who had lost their way. For many years they lived, doing good to all, and when their end came, almost at the same time, they were well stricken in years, and their people were firmly convinced that they were saints.

HETTEL THE HEGELING

When the daughter of Hagen of Ireland was of marriageable age, Hettel was King of Denmark, and he held his court at Castle Mattelane. He was a great warrior and many owed him allegiance, chief among these was his kinsman, old Wate, ruler of Sturmland, famous as a doughty fighter. Also there were the powerful lords Horand and Frute, both of Denmark; Irold the Swift, of Friesland, and Morung of Nifland. All of these were eager to help their over-lord, should occasion arise.

One night, when they were feasting together, Morung suggested to King Hettel that it was quite time he sought a wife, and said that Gerling, daughter of King Hagen of Ireland, was a fit mate for him, as she was famous for her beauty and virtue. Horand and Frute, each of whom was a noted minstrel, also said

that she was justly praised, but that her father would permit none to woo her who could not overcome him in battle.

All of this made Hettel wish to make the fair Gerling his wife, so he asked who would undertake the wooing for him. All answered that old Wate was the man to be his ambassador; but though he had no desire to act in any such capacity, he promised that he would undertake the duty if Horand and Frute would accompany him.

The latter two agreed to this if Irold the Swift, King of the Northland, would join them. He assented, and so the three warriors prepared for the journey. They fitted out a fleet of ships laden with gifts and a thousand men, and started upon their journey. In due course they reached Castle Balian, where Hagen held his court.

So splendidly were their ships appointed that they were greeted with amazement, for none in Ireland had seen such magnificence. The captains of the ships explained their presence by saying that they were merchants on a trading expedition. The news of their arrival was brought speedily to Hagen, who hastened to the wharf where the ships had docked. Then Frute and Horand came forward and said that they were not really merchants, but were fugitives from their over-lord, Hettel the Hegeling.

This caused Hagen to laugh, because he had heard much of this King of Denmark, and greatly had desired to engage him in single combat. He therefore welcomed the visitors and invited them to visit his castle. The invitation was accepted, and the rich gifts they had brought were presented to the King and Queen. The offerings were so abundant that Hagen would willingly have given lands and houses to the strangers, in order to keep them in the country. But they would not promise to stay, because they had wives and families to whom they hoped to return.

At the banqueting-hall they were presented to the Princess, and all had much to say except Wate, their leader.

The Queen whispered to her daughter that she should greet the foreign lord, but the girl feared to, because he looked so stern and was a head taller than any of the others. Hagen's wife asked Wate why he was so silent, and he answered that he was anxious for his ship, as a storm was coming.

The Princess asked him if he were not happy with them, or if he would rather be out in the storm, or fighting?

Old Wate answered: "Lady, I have never learned to dance nor to talk softly with women, but I do love the din of battle, where the Norns sing of glorious death or conquest."

This was a long speech for this austere old man, but the other warriors spoke of the beauties of their country and of its castles, knights, and minstrels. When the banqueting was over the night was far gone, and the visitors took leave of their hosts and retired.

In the morning Horand sang before the Queen and her daughter, and both were charmed with his songs. And so the days passed, enlivened by tournaments, minstrelsy and feasting.

One day, when Horand was alone with the Princess, he sang about a great king who had fallen sick through his love for a maiden named Gerling. The song caused her to think

this to be personal, so she asked for the name of the king who cared for her. Then the minstrel showed her a portrait of King Hettel and also spoke to her about her father's actions toward those knights who would woo her. He also told her of the secret mission upon which he and his companions had come, and he besought her to come with them to Hegelingland, where the King anxiously awaited her.

But Gerling would only promise to look at their ships and the beautiful things they had brought.

After being entertained for many days, the Norsemen said to King Hagen: "Sire, we have received good news from home. Our King now knows that false charges were made against us, and we are restored to his favor. We therefore wish to thank you for your great kindness to us and to return to our own land."

Hagen had become fond of his guests and did not wish them to depart without giving them valuable gifts. But when he offered them, Frute said: "We are already so rich that we cannot accept your gifts of gold and

silver, but it would pleasure us greatly if you would deign to board our ships and banquet with us there."

This Hagen did not wish to do, but the Queen and their daughter desired it, so he gave way to them.

The ships were all ready for their departure when Hagen and his party appeared. Boats to take them aboard were awaiting them, and Horand took the gentle Gerling to her maid and steered them to his ship. Hagen and his followers were about to enter another boat when Wate, Frute and Irold thrust them back and pushed away from the land, and as soon as they reached the ships they set sail.

Hagen rushed into the water as far as he could and called upon his warriors to pursue the traitors, but all to no purpose, for the Irish boats were not ready for sea and by this time the Hegeling ships were almost out of sight.

During the voyage, which lasted for several days, the fair Gerling wept on account of her father and mother, but Horand sang to her, and his sweet voice gave her much comfort. At length they reached Denmark, where King Hettel awaited them.

When they had landed, Hettel showed great attention to Gerling, and he treated her with such kindness and consideration that he soon gained her affection.

They were preparing to depart for his castle of Matterlane when they saw a great fleet of ships approaching, and from each ship floated the banner of the Cross. Hettel at first thought them to be Crusaders on their way to fight the pagans, but soon the flag of King Hagen was hoisted, and then he knew that it was against him that an enemy was come.

Their warriors were drawn up in battle array, and old Wate was filled with joy at the prospect of a passage of arms against the formidable Irish King. All the warriors were cheerful, but the fair Gerling grieved that she should be the cause of bloodshed.

The ships came to anchor and boats full of armed men came toward the shore, but they met with such resistance that they could not land. Then Hagen flung himself into the water and, followed by his bravest men, fought his way to the shore. He fought so fiercely that there was no staying him, and soon King Hettel fell wounded and was carried away.

And now old Wate sought Hagen, and there followed an encounter in which each fought like a lion, but neither gave way. Both were severely wounded when King Hettel, bandaged and pale from loss of blood, reached them, and the gentle Gerling was leaning upon his arm.

Hettel threw his arms about old Wate and Gerling did the same to her father, and both entreated them to make peace.

Hagen clasped his daughter in his arms, for he was touched by her solicitude, and then he held out his hand, first to Hettel and then to old Wate.

And so the battle was over, and as soon as the wounded were attended to a great banquet was held. A ship was despatched for Queen Gerling, and when she arrived they all departed for the castle at Matterlane, where King Hettel and the fair maiden were married with great pomp.

SIR ANDREW BARTON

ONE beautiful day in the month of May King Henry was out riding. He had crossed over the river Thames when he was met by a deputation of eighty London merchants.

They bowed before the King, who welcomed them as good sailors and rich merchants.

Then they said to King Henry: "Sire, we are surely good sailors, but we cannot be rich merchants, for our ships cannot land our wares in France or Flanders because of a bold pirate who robs us of all our merchandise."

At this the King frowned and, turning round, swore that he had not thought there could be any one who could do them such wrong.

The merchants sighed, and said: "He is a proud Scot that robs on the seas, and his name is Sir Andrew Barton."

The King looked angrily over his shoulder

and asked: "Is there a lord in all my realm who will undertake to capture this traitor?"

Then spoke Lord Howard: "If it please your Grace to give me leave, I will be the one to bring this pirate to you."

The King replied: "You are but a young man, and lack the experience which yonder Scot possesses."

"Trust me, my liege," said Howard. "If I do not take him prisoner, I will never appear before you again."

"Very well," said Henry; "then choose what bowmen and gunners you wish, also sailors to man your ships." And so he gave him the command.

The first man that Lord Howard chose was considered the ablest gunner in the country, although he was seventy years old. Peter Simon was his name.

"Peter," said he, "I am going to sea to capture a traitor, and have chosen you to be the head of a hundred gunners."

"My Lord," said Peter, "if you have chosen me to be the head of a hundred gunners, you may hang me to the mainmast if I miss my mark by the breadth of a shilling." Lord Howard then selected William Horsley, a gentleman of Yorkshire, who had won fame as a bowman.

"Horsley," said he, "I must with speed seek a traitor on the sea, and I have chosen you to be the head of a hundred archers."

"If you have chosen me to be the head of a hundred archers," said William, "you may hang me to the mainmast if I miss twelve score by a penny's breadth."

So with pikes and guns and bold archers the noble Howard sailed from the mouth of the Thames with a valiant heart and great good cheer.

After sailing for three days he overhauled a large ship and requested the captain to give an account of himself.

"My name is Henry Hunt," said the captain, "and I and my ship hail from Newcastle." Then he sighed and added: "Yesterday I was the prisoner of Sir Andrew Barton, a Scottish pirate. I was sailing to Bordeaux when he captured my ship and robbed me of all my merchandise. And now I owe many debts, and am bound to London to beg a boon of our gracious King."

"That you need not do," said Lord Howard.
"Let me see the thief but once and for every penny taken from you shall be given twice three shillings."

Then said the merchant: "God keep you out of that traitor's hands, for little you know what man he is. His ship is armored with brass within and steel without, and on his top-castle are strong beams, and on each side are eighteen pieces of ordnance. Besides these, he has a well-made pinnace which carries nearly two hundred men, and on each side of which are fifteen cannons. And if you had twenty ships and he but one, he would overcome them all if his strong beams fell down upon them."

"You give cold comfort," said my lord, "yet I'll take both him and his ship, or else he will carry me back to Scotland."

"Then," said Hunt, "you must have a gunner who can aim straight and sink his pinnace, or you will never be able to defeat him. And if you should by chance board his ship, let no man go to his topcastle to try to let down the beams. Now, if your Honor will lend me

seven pieces of ordnance for each side of my ship, I will lead you on the sea, and swear that by nine o'clock to-morrow morning you shall meet with Sir Andrew Barton, knight."

So Lord Howard lent the guns, and, as the merchant had said, the next morning by nine o'clock they sighted Sir Andrew Barton's ship.

It was a beautiful ship and about it was so much gilt that when the sun shone upon it the eye was quite dazzled.

Then Howard ordered a white willow wand such as merchants used to be put in place of the banners, and thus they passed by Sir. Andrew.

"What English churls are yonder who show me so little courtesy?" said the rover. "For more than three years I have been admiral of the sea, and never an English nor Portuguese ship can pass this way without my leave."

Then he ordered forth his stout pinnace, and swore that all these English peddlers should hang at his mainmast.

With that the pinnace fired a broadside which killed fourteen of Howard's men and struck down his foremast.

"Come here, Simon," said my lord, "and see that your words come true, for if you miss your mark one shilling's breadth, you shall hang at my mainmast."

Simon was an old man, but he was bold. He laid his ordnance low, and put in chain nine yards long, and then filled it with other great shot. And then he fired, and so true was his eye that Sir Andrew saw his pinnace sink in the sea.

How his heart swelled with rage! He cried: "Now cut my ropes, it is time to be gone. I'll fetch you peddlers back myself."

When my lord saw Sir Andrew loose he was glad at heart, and ordered the banners to be spread, the drums to beat, and the trumpets to sound.

"Whatever happens, fight on, my men," said Sir Andrew, "for it is the Lord Admiral of England who seeks me."

Now Simon had a son with him who was almost as good a gunner as he was himself, and he fired a shot that scared Sir Andrew, for it killed sixty of his men. Then Henry Hunt came bravely on the other side and shot

down his foremast, besides killing eighty men.

"Now, alas!" cried Sir Andrew, "what can I say? Yonder merchant who has done me so much damage was my prisoner yesterday."

He called to him a trusty man of the Gordon clan, and offered him three hundred marks if he would make the beams fall down on the merchant ship.

Then Lord Howard said to Horsley: "See now that your words be true, for you shall hang at the mainmast if you miss twelvescore one penny's breadth."

The Gordon worked with might and main to loose the beams on the mainmast, but Horsley shot him through the brain with an arrow, so that he fell, wounded to death, into the hatches. And the word went through Sir Andrew's men that the Gordon was dead.

Then the rover called to his nephew, James Hambilton and offered him six hundred nobles if he would let down the beams.

James sprang nimbly to the mainmast, and did his best to release the beams, but soon he

fell to the deck, pierced through the heart with an arrow from Horsley's bow. And at this every Scot cried: "Wellaway! Alas! a comely youth is slain."

All woe-begone was Sir Andrew, and filled with grief and rage. He ordered that his armor of proof, gilded with clear gold, be brought to him.

This suit of armor was so stout that neither bullet nor arrow could more than dent it. It had been given to Sir Andrew by his brother John, with whom it had seen much service in war. As the rover often said:

"And when he had on this armor of proof,
He was a gallant sight to see:
Ah! ne'er didst thou meet with living wight,
My dear brother, could cope with thee."

And a gallant sight was Sir Andrew when he had donned the suit. Now he started for the topcastle to free the beams himself, and Lord Howard said to Horsley: "Come hither, and see that your shaft goes true. Shoot a good shot in this time of need, and for it you shall be made a knight." "I'll shoot my best with might and main, as your Honor shall see," replied the stout bowman; "but I have now only two arrows left."

Then, as Sir Andrew worked hard at the tree, Horsley's arrow struck him full upon his breast, but bounded back again.

The archer now had but one shaft. Suddenly his eagle eye caught sight of a small piece of leather underneath the shoulder of Sir Andrew's right arm, where the armor was joined, and, drawing his bow, his last arrow reached the rover's heart.

"Fight on, my men," said Sir Andrew.
"I'm somewhat hurt, but not yet slain; for a while I'll rest, but soon again will I be in the fight. Flinch not, but stand fast by St. Andrew's cross until you hear my whistle blow."

But his men's hearts waxed sore with dread, for they never heard his whistle blow. Then said Horsley: "My Lord, let us board the pirate ship, for well I know Sir Andrew's dead."

So then they boarded the noble ship, and

eighteen score Scots they found alive; the rest were either wounded or slain. Sir Andrew's body was buried in the sea, and Lord Howard said: "If you were alive as you are dead, many a day would pass before I could see England again."

Then he sailed back to the Thames with much joy and triumph, and he wrote a letter to the King, telling him of the noble prize he had brought and that Sir Andrew's ship was the greatest afloat.

King Henry welcomed the noble Howard with royal cheer, and asked where the stout rover was, that he himself might pronounce his doom.

"The rover is safe full many a fathom deep in the sea, my liege," said Howard; "and if he were alive as he is dead, I must have left England many a day. And your Grace must thank four men in the ship for the victory we have won. These are William Horsley, Henry Hunt, Peter Simon and his son."

Then said the King to Henry Hunt: "A noble a day shall you have for life and all Sir Andrew's jewels." And to Horsley he said:

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"You shall be made knight and endowed with lands and livings." And to Lord Howard he gave an earldom. Peter Simon and his son were to be maintained always in comfort, and to every man on the ship was given five hundred marks.

"I would give a thousand marks were Sir Andrew now alive," said the King, "for he played a manful part. To each of his men shall be given twelve pence a day, and they shall be returned to their own land."

Maria and

HAGEN

HAGEN, the son of King Sigeband of Ireland, was a sturdy, good-natured little boy, and he was the leader in all the games and sports of which the athletic children of those days were so fond.

One fine summer's day the boys were engaged in throwing their spears at a target. When they had thrown them all they ran forward to get their weapons, and as the young prince could beat them all at running, he was the first to reach the target. He was pulling out his spear when an old man called out: "Run away and hide, children, for danger is in the sky."

They all looked up, and true enough, a huge griffin was seen to be approaching with the swiftness of an arrow shot from the bow.

All fled but Hagen, who, although but a

child, feared nothing. He boldly stood his ground and, seizing his spear, threw it with all his strength at the fierce bird. The weapon merely grazed the feathers of the griffin, which swooped down upon the child and, gripping him with his talons, was soon speeding through the air with its human burden. Many years passed before his parents saw him again.

There was no hope of rescue, for the flight of the huge bird was too swift. The heir to the throne was gone, and now there was only sorrow where so short a time before had been mirth and joy.

The nest of the griffin was built on a rock rising out of the water, many miles away, and here the bird left the boy for its young ones to eat, and then flew away for more spoil.

Hagen defended himself against the little griffins as well as he could and fought them with all his strength. But one of them was quite large and could fly, so it caught up the boy and carried him to the branch of a tree, greedily intending to eat him himself. But the bough bent under their combined weight,

and soon it broke, and both fell into a thicket of thorns beneath.

The fall frightened the griffin, which flew away, and Hagen crept as far into the thicket as he could, and at length he reached a cave, where he lay down, completely tired out, and fell asleep.

When he awoke he saw a little girl of about his own age looking at him in astonishment. He moved himself, that he might see her better, and as he did so she ran away, frightened. And no wonder, because his clothes were in rags and he was dirty and bleeding after his struggle with the birds and his fall among the thorns. He followed painfully in the direction taken by the girl, and at length found her, cowering against the wall at the end of the cave, and with her were two other girls.

They were all terrified by the sight of him, but their fears were calmed when he told them how he had reached the cave after having escaped from the griffin's nest in so miraculous a manner. And when he had finished his story they told him theirs, which was similar to his own. The girl he had seen

when he awoke was an Indian princess, named Gerling; the second was Mimé, whose home was in Spain, and the third had come from far-off Iceland.

The three maidens very carefully nursed Hagen, who had received many wounds, and before long he was as well and strong as ever. His first thought was to provide food for them all, and so he made a bow and arrows and soon had a supply of small game, which he continually replenished. And they grew wonderfully strong and hardy, perhaps on account of their rough way of living, and when Hagen was twelve years old he was quite like a grown-up man.

In the course of time the young griffins were big enough to go out and find their own food, so that the children had to exercise great care and watchfulness, and did not wander about as they had been doing. But one day, during a heavy storm, Hagen ventured down to the seashore, which was not far from the cave. The wind howled and lashed the waves to fury. It was almost dark as night, but every now and then a vivid flash of lightning would reveal the wild and foaming sea as it dashed frantically against the rocks, making a din almost equal to the pealing of thunder.

Suddenly he caught sight of a boat struggling to reach the land. He was fearful for the safety of the crew, because it seemed impossible for any craft to live in so wild a sea. Suddenly the boat struck a rock, and soon it was swallowed by the angry waters.

The next day was calm and beautiful, seeming to belie the storm of yesterday. Along the shore were scattered pieces of the wreck, and here and there were bodies which had been cast up by the sea. Hagen thought to find something useful from the wreckage, and was looking along the shore when he heard the whirr of the griffin's wings, and he knew that the great birds had scented their prey.

While the monsters were making their horrible meal, Hagen saw the body of a drowned man clad in armor, and upon him were sword, bow and quiver of steel-pointed arrows. The fortunate discovery of these arms filled him with joy. He at once put on the coat of mail and the helmet, girded him-

self with the sword. And just in time he picked up the bow and arrows, for the griffins had caught sight of him. As they swooped down he drew the bow with all his strength, and the first among the birds fell at his feet, dead. A second met with a similar fate and the others, which attacked him all at once, he slew with the sword.

He went at once to the maidens in the cave, and they rejoiced at his victory. Going with him to the shore, they helped him bury the body of the dead warrior, and the griffins were thrown into the sea. Then they sought for provisions that might have come ashore from the wreck, but though they found none of these, they did discover a box with flint and steel, with which they could make a fire. This they had been unable to do before, so now they were able to feast on cooked food.

Hagen could now hunt at will. The griffins were killed, and he had good weapons, with which he slew many wild beasts. On one of these hunting expeditions he met with a curious monster whose body was covered with shining scales. He struck it upon the back with a sharp arrow, but it had no effect, neither had a second. He then attempted to slay the beast with his sword, but to no purpose. It was all that he could do to escape the monster's terrible claws, and the struggle had almost exhausted him when he saw his opportunity and plunged his sword into the great open mouth.

He was overcome with fatigue and sat upon the body of the creature. So great was his thirst that he drank some of the blood which came from the monster's wounds. Immediately strength came to him and a sense of power such as he had not known before. He would not hesitate now to fight all the wild beasts and griffins together.

The years passed by and no ship came in sight. Hagen and his companions were happy together, but they longed for the haunts of men and women. At length one morning Hagen saw the sails of a vessel in the distance. He made a great fire, and he saw that this signal attracted the attention of those on board. A boat was lowered from the ship and soon reached the shore.

The sailors took them to the ship and Hagen told their story to the captain. When he said that he was the son of King Sigeband, the captain said: "This is fortunate for me, for I am Count Garadie, to whom your father has done much injury. I will hold you as hostage until I receive satisfaction." Then turning to his men, he ordered them to put Hagen in chains.

Hagen became fierce with anger, and seizing the sailors who came against him, he threw them into the sea; then, with drawn sword, he rushed upon the Count, and would have killed him, when Gerling laid her hand upon his arm.

Now Gerling possessed a wonderful influence over Hagen and there was nothing he would not do for her. Besides being beautiful, she was always kind and generous. And now, at the sight of her gentle face, his rage left him. She spoke words of peace to both Hagen and the Count, and when Hagen promised to see that all should be put right between him and his father, the Count agreed to set sail for Ireland, and in a few days the walls of the King's castle at Balian came in sight.

Great was the joy of Hagen's parents when they knew that their son whom they had supposed to be long since dead, had returned to them. Peace was made between the King and Count Garadie, and great honor was done to all.

Hagen was not content to live quietly in his father's castle; he desired to do things which would bring him fame, and soon he became known for his knightly deeds. His father was old, and as time went on he began to wish for peace and quiet rather than the strenuous life he had to lead as king, and so he appointed Hagen to rule the country in his place.

His mother wished Hagen to marry and settle down, and so he wooed and won the fair Gerling, who had been very dear to him ever since he had first seen her in the cave.

About two years after Hagen and Gerling were married, the old King and Queen died, but before this happened they had the happiness to hold in their arms a grandchild, who was also called Gerling.

The Princess Gerling grew up to be as good and beautiful as her mother, and many knights

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sought her hand in marriage. But Hagen declared that none should marry his daughter who was not able to overcome him in fair fight. Many attempted, but met with defeat, and it was not until the powerful King of Denmark and his warriors had fought a great fight with Hagen and his followers that the gentle maiden was won.

KING ROTHER'S MESSENGERS

I

THE old Italian town of Bari was once a great seaport; the harbor was large and full of shipping and the town itself could boast of many palaces and gardens. And here the famous King Rother held his court.

The palace of the King overlooked the sea, and one day, as he was seated on his throne, there was a troubled look upon his face. He turned to his faithful standard-bearer, Duke Berchther, and said: "How those waves hold their foam-crested heads high in the air, dash forward, and become lost as they beat against the shore. So it is with all men of the earth, kings as well as subjects."

"Sire," cried the Duke, "you are already praised in song, and the minstrels will carry your fame from generation to generation, and your great deeds will cause your name to be known forever." "But what of the present?" said the King. "There is but little comfort to me now in what may be told in the future. Look at you, with all your brave sons in whom you live again, and who will love you in your old age. My throne is useless to me, for I have no wife or child to share it with."

"Well," said the Duke, "why do you not marry? You are a famous warrior and still young, and might choose any simple maiden or great princess you wish for a wife."

"I am not free to choose," replied the King somewhat bitterly, "because rulers are fettered by being obliged to marry their equals in rank. I have visited many countries, but never yet have I seen the princess I could have wished to be my consort."

"Your Majesty," said the Duke, "I know a princess who would suit you, but to win her you would have to risk your life."

The King's curiosity was aroused, and he sought for more information. Berchther then showed him the picture of a lovely maiden, who, he said, was the daughter of the Emperor of Constantinople. King Rother

was infatuated with the portrait and swore that the original should be his wife.

Then the Duke explained that the Emperor was so devoted to his daughter that he would not part with her, and would allow no man, however high his station, to woo her, on pain of death.

King Rother then called a meeting of his councillors and laid the matter before them, saying that he intended to pay court to the lady in person. From this course his ministers endeavored to dissuade him, pointing out that as the head of a great state he had no right to run into unnecessary danger.

There was much debating over the matter, and finally it was decided that twelve ambassadors be appointed to wait upon the Emperor. But as each man valued his own life, there was considerable discussion as to which twelve would risk their safety in the dangerous mission. Then Leopold, Berchther's eldest son, said that he and six of his brothers were ready to start as soon as a ship could be fitted out; and at once five other nobles expressed their willingness to go with them.

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Immediately preparations were made for their departure, and soon the day on which the twelve ambassadors were to sail arrived. As they were about to start, the King sang to them a sweet and stirring farewell song which moved them greatly, and seemed to say to them that the god of battles called upon them to be up and doing. And as Rother took leave of them he said: "If ever you are in need and hear that song, you may know that I am near and will help you."

The ship set sail, and after a long voyage the Golden Horn, which is the port of Constantinople, was sighted, and soon the travelers landed. The twelve were so very handsomely dressed that everyone turned to gaxe upon them and wondered what puissant prince had sent them.

It was early morning and the Emperor was still asleep, when the Empress awoke him and said: "The ambassadors of some great king, with tidings of importance, await you, and must be received with due honor."

When Constantin was ready he directed that the envoys be brought to him in the throneroom, and there he received them with great courtesy. He was delighted to know that his friendship was sought by the doughty king of the west, and for a while all was well. But when Leopold reached that part of the message in which his royal master commissioned him to ask for the hand of the Princess Ada, the Emperor's wrath was great, and he ordered that the foreigners be seized and cast into prison

As soon as the twelve were taken away, Constantin began to consider in what manner they should be put to death. He finally decided to have them hanged, as twelve so gorgeously attired gentlemen on the gallows would be a marvelous spectacle.

He told the Empress of his intention, but she did not agree with such severity. "Is our lovely daughter never to marry?" said she. "Would it not be well to let her rule the west with the great King Rother, as we do the east? If you put these messengers to death, most certainly will their liege lord seek to avenge them, and ally himself with your enemy, the heathen king of Desert-Babylon, and perhaps cause your overthrow."

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She then prudently suggested that he hold them as hostages, so that his hands might be strengthened when King Rother came to demand them at the head of his army.

The Emperor was pleased with this counsel, and ordered that the prisoners be loaded with chains and carefully guarded.

KING ROTHER'S JOURNEY

II

A YEAR passed by without the return of King Rother's ambassadors and all at Bari feared for them. None could say whether it had been their fate to be overcome by storms at sea, or if the tyrant to whom they had been sent had caused them to be put to death.

At last old Berchther went to the King and said: "Sire, my heart is heavy with sorrow and I can bear this suspense no longer. Of my twelve brave sons, Helfrich was slain while fighting the barbarians of the north, and now seven have gone to Constantinople and have not returned. I will go in search of them."

"You shall not go alone," returned the King.
"A meeting of my ministers will say what had best be done."

So a royal council was called, and a heated

discussion ensued, in which it was decided that it would be unwise to send an army against Constantinople, because if the twelve messengers were still alive they would certainly be put to death if an enemy were to appear with King Rother at the head. It would be the better plan to send a well-appointed embassage to spy out the land and see if it were not possible to save their friends and at the same time gain the hand of the Princess.

Then King Rother said he would place himself at the head of the expedition, and so he appointed Count Amelger to be Regent during his absence.

Preparations for their departure were at once made, and from all parts of the country great nobles offered their services. Among those accepted for this service were twelve men whom King Rother alone knew. They were the giant Osbern and eleven of his tallest men. So big and strong were they that it was almost impossible to find horses capable of bearing their weight.

At length they set sail, and as the wind filled the sheets the King sang so that the

hearts of all were filled with thoughts of daring deeds.

Rother called his chiefs about him and told them of his cunning plan. He would introduce himself to Constantin as Dietrich, an outlawed noble of King Rother's country, who craved the Emperor's protection. And that they might make no mistake in future, he requested that they all call him by his assumed name from this time.

They reached their destination, and "Dietrich" and old Berchther were the first on shore. Then followed the others, with the giants last. All were appareled in princely raiment and with wonderful armor.

They were well received by the Emperor and Empress, but Constantin desired who they were and whence they came before granting them permission to stay in his country.

"Mighty ruler of Greece, Hungary and Bulgaria," answered Dietrich, "we come from the country of King Rother, where I bore the title of duke. There my prowess in battle aroused his jealousy, and I was forced to fly for my life. I and my vassals have come here

as fugitives, and with us we have brought great wealth. If you will grant me your protection, I promise that you shall be repaid by faithful service in the field."

"I can see that you are an honest man," replied Constantin, "and you are welcome. I feared at first that you had come on an errand similar to that of King Rother's ambassadors, who requested the hand of my daughter in marriage to their master. They are now safely imprisoned under lock and key, and had your errand been the same, you would suffer a like fate."

At this the giant Osbern started forward, his hand upon the hilt of his sword. "You would have found that a very difficult undertaking, my Lord," said he to the Emperor. "We are neither children nor lambs to be imprisoned or slain at the will of any man."

The Emperor endeavored to soothe the angry giant, and invited his visitors to a feast. While they were sitting at the table a tame tiger, one of Constantin's pets, came among them and attempted to steal some food that Osbern was about to eat. This enraged the

giant, who, picking up the powerful beast as easily as though it were a cat or a dog, flung it against the wall with such force that it was killed immediately.

Constantin wished to have his gigantic guest turned out of the banqueting hall, but the Empress whispered that care must be taken in dealing with so mighty a man, who was not to be trifled with, and she added that King Rother must, indeed, be a great king to have outlawed such men as these.

The Emperor listened to her in silence. Then she said: "I would advise that you free the imprisoned envoys and send our daughter with them to their country, that she may become the wife of a powerful king, who may become our friend. The two nations together would rule the world."

Constantin angrily requested her to cease, and said that when his mind was once made up, nothing on earth could change it.

Quarters were assigned to Dietrich and his followers, and to their new abode the sailors transferred the treasures they had brought. Many acquaintances did they make, and upon

all of these did they shower gifts. Among those upon whom they bestowed their bounty were Count Helme, and a brave but almost penniless warrior named Arnold.

The latter was touched by the kindness Dietrich showed to him, and swore to aid the beneficent nobleman whenever it might be in his power to do so.

Much comment was aroused by the generosity and wealth of Dietrich, especially in the royal palace, but none was more curious to see the hero of all this talk than the Princess Ada. She and her lady-in-waiting, Herlind, sought to devise a plan whereby this might be brought about, and at last she begged the Emperor to appoint a day for games and sports which the ladies might attend.

To this Constantin assented and the proclamation was made. But on the appointed day so great a crowd of people gathered around Dietrich and those who were in his suite that none of the ladies of the court could get even a glimpse of him.

Ada was disappointed, but the following day she promised Herlind a golden bracelet if she would contrive a secret meeting between her and the stranger.

Then Herlind went direct to Dietrich's abode and told him frankly what her mistress had said. But he would not visit the Princess, fearing that the Emperor might hear of it. Before Herlind took her leave, however, he gave her a golden and a silver shoe.

Herlind reported the failure of her mission to the Princess, who said: "He is truly a noble man and cares much for our honor. But let me keep the shoes, and in their place I will give you as many golden coins as they will hold."

This quite satisfied Herlind, and she tried to fit the shoes to her lady's feet, but found this to be impossible, because both were for the same foot.

This seemed to anger Ada, who requested her lady-in-waiting to return the odd shoes to Dietrich and to say that she no longer wished to see him.

But Herlind knew that this was but a ruse, so she hastened back and told Dietrich that the Princess was angry with him, but withal was so curious that she would certainly forgive him if he were to take a proper pair of shoes with his own hand. So as soon as an opportunity to reach unseen that part of the palace occupied by her Highness occurred, he seized it, and knocked on the door.

He had never pictured a maiden of such beauty as now appeared upon the threshold, and he was truly amazed. The Princess, too, marveled at his stately and manly bearing, so much so that, while she had intended to receive him coldly, she merely listened quietly to and accepted the explanation he gave for not having obeyed her request at once.

For a time they conversed, during which he told her of King Rother's proposal for her hand. And then, by degrees, he disclosed his real name and the reason for his presence in Constantinople. At last he told her of his love, and she promised to be his wife.

They agreed that on account of the Emperor's refusal to allow any man to woo her, their only opportunity lay in flight. But Rother said that before this could happen his faithful messengers must be set free. He

asked Ada's help to bring this about, and she promised to do her best.

Next morning the Princess dressed herself in mourning, and when her father asked the reason for this, she explained it by saying that she had had a dreadful dream in the night. Her room had appeared to be full of flames, and a voice had called to her saying that if King Rother's twelve messengers were not released, death would come to her.

"I will not obey such a command as that," said Constantin. "But if it will make you any the happier, I will permit the prisoners to have their liberty for a short time, providing someone will offer himself as hostage to prevent any attempt at their escaping."

Ada received comfort from this permission, for she had settled upon a plan to be carried out.

THE MESSENGERS FREED

III

THAT day, when the Emperor, guests and courtiers were seated in the dining-hall, Princess Ada, followed by her ladies, entered the room. Going round the table, she told everyone of the condition her father had made in answer to her request for the liberation of the twelve prisoners.

"Who," she asked, "will offer himself as hostage for these men?"

For a time there was silence, and then Dietrich arose and offered himself as surety. Then the Emperor directed that the twelve be brought out of their prison and suitably clothed.

This was done, and the twelve were soon seated at a table, with a comforting meal before them. They could scarcely persuade themselves that they were not dreaming, but suddenly they heard a song to which they listened intently. And then their faces expressed the joy each one felt, for the song they heard was the same that their King had sung when they departed from Bari, and which assured them that help was at hand.

The long imprisonment had greatly weakened them, but as the weeks passed, light, good food and exercise quite restored their strength. Although they had not been allowed to mingle with others, they retained the belief in their coming freedom which the King's song had given them. They were not surprised, therefore, when one day the door of their room was opened and in came Rother, dressed in full armor.

"You are free," he cried joyously; but before he had finished greeting them, in rushed Duke Berchther, who warmly embraced his sons. Behind him were the giant Osbern and his inseparable companion Widolt.

Rother told them all about their voyage and how he was known in Constantinople under the name of Dietrich. He said that they owed their freedom to the Princess Ada, whose love he had won, and that he himself was hostage for them.

But there was more to follow. Constantin's country had been invaded by Imelot, King of Desert-Babylon, who demanded not only the division of the empire, but the hand of the Princess Ada for his son Basilistum. "The Emperor was at his wits' end," went on the King, "when I offered our help, provided you would be allowed to join us. To this he was glad to consent, so now you are free, and together we will go to the war. Your arms and armor are ready for you."

* * * * * * *

Very noticeable were Dietrich and his followers among those led by Constantin. Their accourrements were magnificent and they were of noble appearance. All were tried and true warriors. On the eve of the great battle they determined that when both forces were asleep they would leave their own camp quietly and slip into that of the enemy, whose password they had managed to discover.

At midnight they set out upon their dangerous undertaking. The night was dark, and

before long they had reached the tent of King Imelot, where the guards were slain before they could make any outcry. Then the giant Widolt entered the tent, and taking Imelot up in his arms as though he were a baby, told him to be silent if he valued his life. But the giant's voice was loud enough to awaken others who slept near, and soon the camp was astir. But the night was so dark that confusion ensued. The cry went up that the enemy had taken possession of their camp, and soon they were in full flight.

So Dietrich and his companions had won a victory, and by early morning they had returned to their own tents, taking with them King Imelot and some of his leaders as prisoners. They had had a night of hard work and were glad to get the repose they had earned.

But somehow this night the Emperor Constantin was uneasy. Usually he arose late, but on this occasion he ordered the camp to be aroused at an early hour, so that he might review his troops. Dietrich and his companions were missing.

The Emperor was suspicious, and went to their part of the camp, where all was silence. Alighting from his horse, he entered the first tent, and there, stretched upon a tiger skin, was the giant Widolt, fast asleep, and close by, tossing about on a bed of straw, was a man, bound hand and foot.

Constantin dare not wake the giant, so he stepped over him very carefully, to see who the prisoner was. Imelot, fearing he was about to be killed, called out his name and offered half his kingdom if his life might be spared. And now the giant was aroused. Shouting to Dietrich, he sprang up and seized his club.

It is certain that both Constantin and Imelot would have lost their lives had not Dietrich and some others responded instantly to Widolt's call, and reached the tent just in time to stay the giant's hand.

When Constantin heard what had occurred he was filled with admiration for the deeds of Dietrich and his companions. He gave a banquet in celebration of the victory, and publicly took all the glory to himself. Dietrich

and his men he sent at once to carry the news to the Empress.

* * * * * * *

The heroes rode gaily back to Constantinople. They were happy, for Dietrich said that they would soon return to Bari.

To carry out his plan, he decided to proclaim that Imelot had won the battle, and was marching against the capital. "Fly and save yourselves," they cried out to the citizens. "Imelot's hordes will soon be upon you." Going at once to the palace, Dietrich begged the Empress and her daughter to bring their ladies and come on board his ship at once, and to take with them anything they valued.

When they reached the quay, all of Dietrich's men went at once on board, and then followed Ada and Dietrich, her hand trustfully resting on his arm. Then the ship was pushed from the shore, leaving the Empress on the dock. She entreated to be taken, too, but Dietrich then told her that Imelot's army was defeated and the King himself taken prisoner. He also told her that he was King Rother, and that her daughter Ada would be his queen and rule over his country with him.

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The Empress was comforted and gave both her blessing. The ship then started on its journey to Bari, which was reached after a pleasant voyage. There King Rother and the Princess Ada were married with pomp and ceremony.

THE CONJURER

IV

THE Emperor Constantin missed his daughter. He was so enraged at King Rother that, had he not feared him so much, he would have sent an army to Bari in an effort to fetch back the Princess.

When he had returned to Constantinople with his victorious army, he found a greatly distraught populace, and in the confusion King Imelot had escaped to his own country. But the loss of his enemy affected him less than the flight of his daughter, and he lost interest in those things which used to be a delight to him.

He was sitting alone in his room one day when a steward announced the arrival in the city of a very clever conjurer, who was sure to please and amuse the Emperor with his marvelous sleight of hand performances.

Constantin, thinking that the man's tricks might be a pleasing diversion, directed that he be brought before him. This was done, but although the mountebank performed his brightest and most adroit tricks, he did not produce even a smile nor a glance of interest from his Majesty. Then the man sang a song about a woman who had been taken from her home by cunning, and at this he did indeed take notice. At the conclusion of the song he requested the man to approach, and he questioned him as to his reason for using these particular words. He discovered that his entertainer not only was aware of all the facts concerning the marriage of his daughter and King Rother, but that he had a plan for bringing her back to Constantinople.

He promised that if the Emperor would give him a swift and well-appointed ship, fully laden with merchandise, he would return with King Rother's wife. He also said that soldiers might be sent with him to see that he carried out his bargain, and if he failed, his life would be forfeit.

The Emperor eagerly agreed, and soon the

ship was laden and ready. It was a fast boat, fully manned with competent sailors, and in addition had a goodly complement of soldiers, the latter to see that the terms of the bargain were carried out.

The ship arrived at the port of Bari, where the conjurer landed. The King was in a distant part of the country, reviewing his troops, and during his absence Count Leopold was in charge of affairs. This pleased the juggler, for he thought it would be easier for him to carry out his plans if the King were away from the city.

He returned to his ship and there gave exhibitions of his skill, which were witnessed by crowds of people. Then he produced his wares and offered them for sale. Among these was a very ordinary-looking round stone, which he handled with great care. He was very watchful of this apparently common pebble, and would allow no one but himself to touch it.

Of course this excited much curiosity, and the people wished to know why he handled it as though it were priceless.

"A ton of diamonds would not be too great a price for this little stone," said he, "for if held in the hand of a queen, a touch from it upon any man, woman or child who may be lame or ill would immediately restore health, strength, or perfect limbs."

At this one of the listeners sighed heavily. "I have four children who have been lame from birth," said he. "I possess great wealth, but would willingly give it all if only they could be cured."

"There is no reason why they should not enjoy life as other children do," said the sham merchant. "Ask your good Queen to come on board my ship and test the worth of this stone."

The man went at once to Queen Ada and related the story to her. With the kindness which had already made her beloved by the people, she at once expressed her willingness to do anything in her power to cure the children. Starting at once for the vessel, she was soon on board. As soon as she had set foot on the deck, the landing plank was taken away, and the ship started out to sea.

The people standing about the harbor seemed bereft of their senses by this act of treachery. Leopold was soon upon the scene, and as soon as he found out what had happened, he tried to find a ship ready to sail, so that the robber's vessel might be pursued at once. But there was none available, so that nothing could be done except to dispatch a swift messenger to King Rother with the news.

The King returned to Bari at once, and decided to lead an army against Constantinople without loss of time. "As my dear wife has been stolen from me by force and cunning," he cried, "even so will I win her back."

A small army of picked warriors was soon assembled, and among them were Osbern and the other giants. The ships had been made ready, and before long they were in the vicinity of Constantinople. Rother ordered the vessels to be beached in a small bay which was surrounded by a dense growth of trees. He knew that in this spot there would be no fear of discovery, because the people of this country had unutterable dread of this wood, which they held to be filled with supernatural

monsters. He ordered his men to encamp here, while he, the Duke of Meran and Count Leopold went on to the city, disguised as pilgrims.

Before they started Count Wolfrat gave the King a small horn which had so shrill a sound when blown that it could be heard for miles. Osbern said that as soon as they heard it, all would come to their help with weapons ready.

The three pilgrims started out on their adventure, and on the road they met a knight in full armor. They asked him if he could give them news of events at Constantinople.

"Only bad news," answered he. "The Greeks have stolen the fair wife of King Rother, and the Emperor has promised her to the cruel Basilistum, son of King Imelot. When Imelot escaped from Constantinople he gathered together a great army and again invaded Constantin's land. He defeated the forces of the Emperor and took him prisoner, and he now demands the half of his territory and the Princess Ada for his cub of a son, who is to remain in Constantinople after the wedding, so that the Emperor may not be

deprived of his daughter's society. The Christians of this country are now in fear and trembling on account of the cruel persecutions which are sure to follow. If only King Rother would come here now! And all that I have I owe to his generosity; he gave me the armor and weapons I am now wearing, and also this noble horse. Besides these, he gave me a thousand gold pieces, for I had lost all my lands and wealth through fraud. As sure as my name is Arnold, if King Rother were only here now, I would join him with all the men I could raise."

Then Rother told Arnold who he was, and truly he was thankful that his act of kindness had won such gratitude. He told Arnold something of his plan, and asked him to join his own men in the haunted wood. This he promised to do forthwith.

When the three reached Constantinople they found the city to be very gay. There was much feasting, and the followers of Constantin and Imelot were entertaining one another. Constantin was joyful now that his daughter was to remain in the city, and so

peace and concord reigned. The banquet-hall was filled, and the ugly, hunch-backed bride-groom-to-be sat between his father and the Emperor, and close by were the sorrowing Ada and her equally sad mother. The people were invited to watch the proceedings through wide-open doors, so that the three pilgrims were easily able to enter without attracting attention. Much laughter was caused by the bragging of the two rulers, and Basilistum, who boasted that they would hang King Rother and his giants if they should venture within the country.

During all this talk Rother managed to slip into his wife's hand a ring which she knew to be his. She at once felt comforted and showed it to her mother.

But the act of passing the ring to her mother was noticed by Basilistum. He seized the ring, and saw that Rother's name was engraved upon it.

Springing up from his chair, he cried out: "Rother is here! Seek him and hold him in custody."

Then there was much confusion. Swords

were drawn, chairs and tables were overthrown, and there was shouting on all sides.

Amidst all this disorder Rother stepped forward, and in a loud voice said: "I am King Rother, and am here to claim my wife, and if King Imelot or his son see fit to deny my right, I am ready to prove it with my sword."

At this Imelot laughed. "We do not fight with poor little kinglets such as you," he cried. "You shall be hanged."

Then he continued: "Seize him and his companions and bind them tight, and away with them to the gallows."

The three heroes had no weapons with which to defend themselves, and although many of those present had cause to remember the munificence of Dietrich (as he had been known to them), no hand was raised to their aid. They were soon seized and bound.

"A king who has proved himself on the battle-field does not fear death," said Rother. "As Constantin has often caused innocent men to meet with a shameful end in the haunted wood, let the executioner now complete his work there."

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This idea appealed to Constantin and Imelot, and the latter said: "There are gallows there ready, and very fit to hang these men upon. And at night the monsters of the wood may make merry with their bodies. All shall see how the great Imelot revenges himself upon his enemies."

In a short time all was ready for the execution, and the prisoners, accompanied by a great throng of people curious to witness the punishment of a crowned ruler, were taken to the haunted wood, where Rother and his companions were conducted to the gallows.

There the executioner quietly expressed to King Rother his sorrow for what he was ordered to do, and reminded him of certain kind treatment he had received from him during his previous visit, and as a mark of gratitude he would substitute a silken rope in place of the common hemp which would have to be used in the case of his two friends. He added that never in his life had he done anything he so much hated to do.

Then Rother asked him if he would loosen his hands for a moment or two, that he might pray.

"I will do that willingly," replied the man, "and I will also pray with you."

As he spoke he loosed the King's hands, and then Rother withdrew from his pilgrim's cloak the horn which he had kept concealed there. As loudly as he could, he sounded it three times.

King Imelot was very impatient at the delay and threatened the executioner with death himself if he did not at once proceed with his task. This frightened the man, who began to bind Rother's hands again.

At this moment much shouting was heard behind them. The noise came from Rother's warriors and from Arnold, who had joined them with his men, and now they all rushed to the rescue. A short but sharp battle ensued, in which Imelot, his son Basilistum and many of their followers were slain, and their army was soon in full flight.

The victorious Rother now sought the Emperor, but as soon as the battle commenced Constantin had fled to his palace, where he hid himself in the apartments of his wife and daughter. His courage was gone, and he

begged them to save him from the wrath of Rother and his giants.

Ada and her mother, with all their numerous attendants, went out to meet King Rother, and hidden in their midst was Constantin. It happened that the first people they met were the giants, and alhough the Emperor was careful to conceal himself, Osbern's eagle eye spied him, and stretching out his long arm, pulled him right over the head of the Empress, holding him by the scruff of his neck.

Widolt was about to kill him with his club, but Osbern stayed his hand, and said that he should be hanged instead.

Very soon Rother and his army came up to them, and the first thing the King did was to release and pardon the Emperor. Now that he had recovered his wife, he had only good will for all. So they returned to the palace and a great banquet was spread, and it was seen that Constantin had quite recovered his appetite.

Rother had now won the Eastern empire, but he left the country under the rule of Constantin, as his regent. As soon as was possible, he and Queen Ada set sail for Bari, and for many years they lived happily and governed their people together.

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LORD BEICHAN AND THE MOOR'S DAUGHTER

LORD BEICHAN, a young noble of high degree, soon tired of the gay life at the English court. He longed to visit other parts of the world, so he fitted out a vessel and set sail.

He voyaged for many months, going from one country to another, and at last he reached Turkey. Here he was taken prisoner by a savage infidel, and as young Beichan refused to worship Mahomet, he was cruelly treated. Yokes were put on his shoulders and he was made to pull carts and wagons.

The hardships he underwent made him sick almost unto death, but still he remained true to his own faith. Then he was cast into a noisome dungeon, where for seven long years he suffered from cold and hunger. In his cell he was chained hand and foot, and in such misery was he that he wished he could die.

The savage Moor who held the young man prisoner had a daughter named Sophia, who resembled her father in nothing. He was full of evil, while she was fair, gentle, good, and of extreme beauty. Every day she walked past young Beichan's prison, and she sorrowed greatly for the helpless captive.

One day she heard him singing a sad song and the words rangs in her ears and she could not forget them. This is how they ran:

"My hounds they all go masterless,
My hawks they fly from tree to tree;
My younger brother will have my land;
My native shore I'll never see!"

That night the Moor's daughter slept not at all for thinking of this song, and very early in the morning, as soon as the day began to dawn, she crept into her father's room and took the keys from under his pillow as he lay asleep. Then she went to the prison, and giving some gold to the warder, prevailed upon him to open the gate. The keys to the inner rooms were among those she had taken from under her father's pillow, and many doors did

she have to unlock before reaching the cell in which the young lord was chained.

He was asleep when she entered, but he awakened at once and looked up at her wonderingly, thinking at first that an angel had come to him, so beautiful was she.

A smile was upon his face when he awoke, and this seemed strange to her until he said that he had dreamed he was at home in his own country.

The maid said to him: "What reward will you give to the lady who should set you free from prison?"

Young Beichan answered: "I have great lands and many castles in my own country and I would willingly give them all to the lady who would set me free."

"Will you promise me that for seven years you will wed with none unless it be with me?" asked the Moor's daughter.

"I will give you my troth, and give it freely, for the sake of your kindness," answered he.

The gentle maiden then freed the young man from his chains, and when they had reached the outer door of the prison, she bribed the warden to unlock the gate, and they were free. She gave Beichan food and drink, and bade him sometimes to think of her who had freed him from captivity.

She told him of the song that had dwelt in her memory, and vowed that for seven years she would not wed with any other man if he would vow to marry no other woman. Then she took a ring from her finger, and breaking it in two, gave half of it to Beichan, and asked him to keep it as a reminder of her love for him.

Then she saw him safely on board a ship bound for his own country, and as Lord Beichan turned to give her his last greeting, he said:

"Fair Lady Sophia, before seven years have passed I will come for you and take you to my own home."

In due time he reached the shores of England, and there the fame of his adventures spread, and all the ladies thronged about the traveler who had escaped from slavery. His homecoming was not free from sorrow, however, for his mother and all his brothers had passed away during his absence; his lands had gone to waste, and his houses and castles were in ruins.

But he was rich, and soon the lands and castles were in repairs, and with the cheerful company of gay friends, the time passed quickly and pleasantly.

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For the Moorish maiden across the sea the time dragged. Always she thought of the young lord, and so little rest did she get that she grew very sick. A voice seemed to say to her: "The one you love has broken his vow."

At length the seven long years were gone and she could bear the suspense no longer. Boarding a ship, she sailed away in search of her lover, and in time reached the pleasant land of England. There she saw a shepherd tending his sheep, and asked him if he could give her news of Lord Beichan.

"The most wonderful news, fair lady," said he. "In yonder castle has been feasting for three and thirty days, and a wedding is to follow. But it is said that the young Lord Beichan loves one who is beyond the sea and keeps aloof from the bride." "You give me good news!" cried Sophia, and she astonished the shepherd by filling his hands with gold and silver.

She went to the castle and rang the bell. The porter came, and Sophia asked if the noble lord were within.

"Yes," answered the porter, who was quite dazzled by the beauty of this maiden. "He is in the hall, where there is much company, for to-day he is to be married."

Then she gave to the porter the half of the broken ring, telling him to give it to the bride-groom, with the love of the lady who freed him from captivity.

The porter hastened to the presence of Lord Beichan, and there, upon his bended knee, he said: "For three and thirty years I have been porter at your gates, but never have my eyes beheld a lady so fair as one who stands at them now. And on each finger she has a ring, and on the middle one three, and her head is crowned with hair of shining gold."

At this the bride's mother spoke out angrily: "Never so fair a lady you have seen before! You must except our bonny bride."

"Madam," said the porter, "your daughter is very fair, but this lady is ten times fairer than your daughter ever was." Then to Lord Beichan he gave the broken ring, saying that with it was the love of the lady who freed him from captivity.

Up sprang Lord Beichan in great haste, knocking over a table in his eagerness. Down the stairs he rushed, and at the gate he clasped his love in his arms.

"Have you forgotten one who gave you liberty, and taken another bride?" asked the Moor's daughter, turning away her head to hide the tears in her eyes.

"Never!" cried Lord Beichan. "Never will I wed any one but you, who have done and endured so much for me."

Then he took her by the hand and led her through his stately halls, welcoming her to her own.

To the bride who was to have been he gave a double dower, and sent her and her mother to their home in a chariot drawn by three horses.

With the Moor's daughter he went to the

fountain in the court of the castle, and there she was baptized, and her name changed from Sophia to "his bonny Lady Jane."

Then the cooks prepared a great feast, and heralds were sent through the town to invite all the people to the wedding, which was celebrated with great ceremony. And the happy Lord Beichan said he would wander no more through foreign countries, for his own true love had crossed the seas to come to him.

HENGEST AND HORSA

Vortigern was a crafty man. He was steward of Britain under King Constantin, a ruler who possessed great wisdom and had won the love and good will of his people. This steward was filled with a desire for power and riches, but with this wise king upon the throne, there was a limit beyond which he dare not go. So he schemed and plotted to get rid of Constantin, and at length bribed a number of Scottish Picts to slay him.

He brought these Picts to Winchester, where the King held his court, and one night let them into the royal chamber by a secret entrance, and there they killed the King in his sleep.

As soon as he had admitted the men to the King's room, Vortigern left them, and after a few minutes had passed he roused the guard, and saying that he had heard a cry from the King, he led them at once to the scene of the

murder. The angry soldiers at once slew everyone of the Picts, so that there was no witness left against the wily Vortigern.

There was great sorrow among the people when they heard of the King's death, and vengeance was vowed upon the Pictish tribes, with whom the people of the north were frequently at war.

Now Constantin had three sons, but all of them were too young to reign, so Vortigern persuaded the councillors of the kingdom to make him Regent until the eldest of the princes should become sixteen years of age, when he should assume the reins of government.

So Vortigern, the traitor, ruled the country, and in time he found ways of getting rid of the young princes, one of whom was slain and the other two imprisoned in a remote part of the country. But although he was now king, his life was not an easy one. He was harsh and oppressive to his subjects, who were consequently rebellious; and he was constantly troubled by the Picts, who sought revenge for the death of their kinsmen. So that, although

his ambition for power had been realized, he was far from happy.

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One day news was brought to Vortigern that several strange ships, containing many men, had anchored off Ebbsfleet, near the mouth of the River Thames. He sent messengers to the visitors, asking their business, and if they came in peace. They sent back word that their visit was peaceful, and that they would like to have speech with the King.

The leaders were invited to Vortigern's court, and after welcoming them, he asked them upon what mission they were, and whence they had come.

"Sire," said the commander, "we are knights from Saxony. I am Hengest and this is my brother Horsa. Our country is rich, but overpopulous, and we desire to take service with you."

At this Vortigern was greatly pleased, for he thought that these men from across the sea would be of great help to him against the Picts. So he accepted their offer and received them with much favor. Soon after this the Picts again invaded the north, so Vortigern sent Hengest and Horsa against them. The Saxons were victorious and drove the Picts out of Britain.

When they returned to the court, Vortigern treated them with greater regard than he did his own knights, and this naturally caused jealousy.

Hengest himself was ambitious for power, so he tried to strengthen his position with the King by turning him against his own people. He made him believe that the Britons were ready to rebel, and offered to safeguard his hold on the throne by sending for more men from Saxony who would fight for him. In return for this service, he must have a royal castle and the King should marry his daughter Rowena.

This plan pleased Vortigern. But although he was willing to marry Rowena, he could not give Hengest the castle he asked for, as that would certainly make the people rebel. Then Hengest shrewdly asked for as much land as could be covered by the hide of a bull.

The King thought this a foolish request and

did not hesitate to agree to it. So Hengest sent to Saxony for more warriors, and then, taking the hide of a huge bull, sought a place which would seem good to him, and where he might spread it. When he had found a place that pleased him he laid the hide on a board, and with a sharp knife cut it into narrow strips about the thickness of a piece of string. These strips, laid end to end, enclosed a large tract of land, and upon this he built a great castle.

Hengest's wife and daughter and the fighting men for whom he had sent had arrived in Britain, and were living on the piece of land which was now his. Hengest invited Vortigern to a banquet in their honor, and in the midst of the revelry Rowena and the King were married.

Soon after this Vortigern invited all the knights in the land to a feast, but none of the Britons would go to it. Then the wily Hengest suggested that his son Aesc, and Ebissa, his son-in-law, should come to Britain, together with all the warriors they could gather together, and defend Vortigern against his enemies. To this the King agreed, and before

long so large an army of Saxons landed that the fighting men among the Britons were outnumbered.

His own knights were alarmed at this and asked the King to send the Saxons away. But he would not listen to them, saying that Rowena was his wife and the others his guests, and that he would not tell them to go.

Then the Britons refused to acknowledge him as their ruler, and going to London, held a great meeting to decide upon what should be done.

Vortigern had been married before, and had a son named Vortimer, a loyal Briton, who hated the Saxons. He came to the meeting, and there the people made him their king. He at once sent to Hengest and Horsa, bidding them leave the country or suffer death.

To this Vortimer received a defiant reply, and immediately he began to gather together a great army. Soon, at the head of thirty thousand men, he marched against the forces of Vortigern and Hengest, which numbered sixty thousand. Then was fought the battle of Aylsford, in which Horsa was slain. The

fighting on both sides was very stubborn, but at last the Britons, who in Vortimer had a great leader, prevailed, and the Saxons were put to flight.

Two more fierce combats took place before the Saxons were finally defeated, and of the sixty thousand warriors, only ten thousand escaped to their ships and returned to their own land.

And now joy and content came to the land. The people were proud of their young king, who ruled wisely and well, and under his guidance they lived in peace and prosperity.

ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON

St. George, the patron saint of England, was born in Cappadocia, a province of Asia Minor, in the month of April, 303 A.D. His parents were Christians, and as soon as he was able he enlisted as a soldier in the army of the Emperor Diocletian. He was so brave and showed so much ability, that at a very early age he was given the rank of Tribune.

His duty called him to England, where his headquarters was established in the city of Coventry. Here he dwelt long enough to be known and loved throughout the country.

Whilst he was abiding at Coventry, the Christians were fighting the Saracen Turks. He was a true Christian, and their cause appealed to him so much that he gave up his high position in the Roman army, and went to join those of his faith who were so bravely striving to recover the Holy Sepulchre,

So he took ship, and landing in France, journeyed through the Lowlands, Germany, and Hungary, until he reached the forces of the Crusaders, on the border of Asia Minor.

There, in many battles, he bore himself so bravely that he won respect even of the Saracens, who called him "The White-horsed Knight," from the fact that he was always mounted on a white horse.

In the course of time he visited the land of Egypt, and as he was in the province ruled by the King Ptolemy, whose capital was the city of Selem, he started out to visit the court of the King.

It was hard traveling across the desert, but his white horse Bucephalus bore him bravely. Often during the wearisome toil through the burning sands did he wish he were at Coventry, with the friends he knew so well. But he kept on, and in time came to a hut, beside which an aged hermit was standing.

The old man stood in his path, and holding out his arms, begged him to go no further. St. George asked him why he called on him to halt.

"Sir Knight," said the hermit, "you are entering upon a land of mourning and tribulation."

"It is my task," said St. George, "to aid those who are in trouble. Tell me what sorrow has befallen the people of this country?"

"Sir Knight," said the old man, "for twenty years a fearful and loathly dragon has ravaged this realm. Whence he came, no one knows. With his poisonous breath and dangerous claws he has destroyed men, women, and cattle, and for some time past it has been his habit each day to devour a maiden. And now, in all the kingdom, there is left but one suitable damsel, and that is the king's daughter, Sabra, whom all love. When she is gone what will become of us all? If only some knight might slay the dragon before the Princess be sacrificed, the King will give her to him in marriage, and make him heir to the throne."

"I seek no reward," said St. George, "but I will make an attempt to slay the dragon and save the Princess."

"Many knights have said the same thing," said the hermit, "and now their bones may be seen in the valley."

"I am a Christian knight," said St. George, "and will do my best to kill the dragon, even though so many have failed. Let me but rest in your hut to-night, and in the morning you shall guide me to the lair of this noisome beast."

He would not be dissuaded from his purpose, so that night he rested in the hermit's hut, and early the next morning the old man took him to the edge of the valley. To enter this he had to go down a steep slope, through a dark wood, and his horse had great difficulty in picking its way. Having passed safely through the wood, he reached the foot of the slope, and there he saw a most beautiful maiden, dressed in pure white silk, bound to a tree.

Immediately he drew his sword and cut her bonds, and she, surprised at his appearance, asked him who he was.

"Princess," said he, "I hope to slay this dragon, and now will you hasten to your father and tell him as soon as my task is accomplished I will pay my respects to him at his court."

At this moment a terrific roar was heard,

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and the echo sounded like thunder in the valley.

The Princess Sabra trembled, but she tried to persuade the knight to forsake his self-imposed task, telling him that many had already perished in a similar attempt.

"There is no task so great that I would not undertake it to save you," answered St. George.

"Then," said she, "I will pray that victory may be yours, and that you will return safely to me, and with honor."

At his desire she went up the hill, at the top of which she turned, waved her hand at him, and then went with all haste to her father's palace.

She found the King and his court to be disconsolate and miserable. Ptolemy was sure that his beloved daughter was lost to him, and not only that, but all knew that no other suitable maiden was left to offer to the dragon, and they were oppressed by the thought of what it might do to them if its wrath were not appeared by the usual offering.

Prince Almidor, son of the Emperor of Morocco, who was a suitor for the hand of Princess Sabra, and who was at the court of King Ptolemy, suggested that the King and his court mount swift horses and camels, and start at once for his father's country, saying that there an army of knights could be found who would deal with the dragon, should he dare to follow them.

The Princess Sabra refused to consider this, saying that a Christian knight was even now doing battle for her and her country, and that it would ill become them to flee and leave him.

Prince Almidor sneered at this, saying: "Many knights have already attempted to slay the dragon, but all have met with defeat. Why should this man be sure of victory?"

The Princess shamed him, saying that this was no ordinary knight, but one who knew not fear, and who would not flee to another country, as the Prince of Morocco wished to do.

"We will wait," said the King; "and while I fear that this brave knight will meet with a fate similar to the others, we can be no worse off if we await the issue of the contest."

So they stayed, and then Prince Almidor remembered that Ptolemy had promised the Princess in marriage to the knight who should slay the dragon, and he thought if this Christian champion should win the battle, he might not gain the hand of the Princess Sabra.

When the beautiful damsel left St. George, he set spurs to his horse and rode swiftly in the direction of the dragon's lair, his spear in rest, and his sword loosed in its scabbard. And on his shield was blazoned the red cross of England.

It needed a doughty spirit to ride across the valley, for all around were the bones of the knights who had been killed by the horrible beast, and here and there could be seen broken swords and spears, and rusty armor.

The roaring of the dragon, which was enough to make one's blood run cold, made the white steed quiver, but St. George never flinched from his duty. Suddenly the monster came forth from its cave. It stood as high as a man on horseback and had a body covered with hard, shiny scales. It breathed from its nostrils a hot, poisonous vapor, and the beating

of its wings made a noise which echoed through the valley like thunder.

St. George gripped his spear firmly and galloped towards the awful thing. Soon they met, and it was as though his weapon had met with a wall of steel. The shaft of his spear broke with the shock, and both horse and rider reeled, and St. George fell from his horse. The onslaught had been so severe that the dragon had recoiled, and only this saved the knight from the dragon's feet.

The Christian knight again mounted his white horse Bucephalus, and drawing his sword, once more dashed against the dragon. This time he pierced the monster's throat, and from the wound spurted a most noxious and deadly venom, which almost overcame him.

The dragon, now seemingly assured of another victim, raised its wings and heaved itself up, in order that it might fall upon horse and rider and crush them. It was a perilous moment for St. George, but at this moment he saw, underneath one of the wings, a place not covered by the scales, but which looked as though it were just a covering of skin.

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He immediately urged his horse to this spot, and putting his whole strength into the thrust, reached the aimed-for point, and his sword entered the dragon's heart, and with a thud the awful creature slowly sank to the earth and died. Then the conqueror severed its head from its body.

St. George had won the fight. He was sore and wearied, but he had done a knightly deed and had freed a country from bondage. Still his work was not yet finished.

The Prince of Morocco, jealous of the feeling shown toward St. George by the King's daughter, had sent several of his retainers to ambush and kill the champion, in case he should be successful in his fight with the dragon, although he did not think this possible. But he had resolved to win the hand of the Princess by foul means if not by fair, and if the white-horsed knight were out of the way, he felt that there would be no obstacle to his suit. It was an act of great treachery, and had the Prince's men been in charge of a real leader, St. George would certainly have been overcome by the odds against him.

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Now, either these men were somewhat shamed by the task given them, or they made too light of it, as they were many against one. At any rate, they were not too careful in hiding themselves from the rays of the sun, which glistened upon their armor, and so put St. George upon his guard. As a good soldier he used his instinct, and this bade him be wary. He knew that something behind the trees caused the reflections, and so had his sword ready before ascending the slope from the valley in which he had defeated and killed the dragon.

St. George set spurs to Bucephalus, and galloped up the hill. Before long, two of the men in ambush sprang upon him, and with one sweep of his sword, both their heads fell from their shoulders. From behind the next tree two more men dashed upon him, and met a similar fate.

And now he had need of all his skill, for the rest of them, twelve in number, rushed upon him. But the trees which before had sheltered them gave St. George the advantage, because they could not reach him in a body, and having to come upon him one or two at a time, he soon disposed of all who came within the length of his sword. Of the attackers but one escaped, and he fled to his master, Prince Almidor, bearing the news that the dragon was slain by a knight who was invincible, and who overcame with his sword all who fought against him.

St. George sheathed his weapon, and with the head of the dragon at his saddle-bow, he rode in the direction of the city.

Before long he was met by a throng of people, at whose head were King Ptolemy and the Princess Sabra. St. George bowed before them, and holding up the head of the dragon, he said: "Hail, King! To you I bring a gift."

"There is no gift that could bring greater happiness to this country," answered the King. "Return with us to the city, and when we have feasted I will grant any boon you may ask of me."

Ptolemy then ordered that the dragon's head be set upon a lance and carried before them, and so, to the joyful strains of music,

they returned to the city. At the royal palace richly furnished rooms were set apart for St. George, and apparel from the King's own wardrobe given him.

A great banquet was held, and at its close the King said: "Sir George of England, I have decreed that to the knight who should save this land from ruin by slaying the dragon shall be given the hand of the Princess Sabra in marriage."

St. George said: "O King, if the Princess be willing, I will wed her, but not against her will."

The King turned to his daughter and asked if she would accept the champion as a husband, and the Princess replied: "I will be his wife." And they were duly betrothed.

But many months passed before St. George and the beautiful Princess Sabra were married. The jealous Prince Almidor made many attempts to destroy his rival, and for a time he poisoned the mind of the King against the champion, who, he said, was plotting to seize the throne. The King had St. George thrown into prison, where he was cruelly treated.

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But in the end the love of the Princess prevailed, and she caused him to see Prince Almidor as he really was. So St. George was released, and finally they were married and returned to Coventry, where was born to them a son, who, when he grew up, was renowned as Guy of Warwick.

ROBIN HOOD AND KING RICHARD

KING RICHARD and many of his knights were staying at the city of Nottingham, near which was the royal park of Plompton, where there had been kept many a herd of deer. But now they hunted with little success, for hardly a stag of any size could be found. Robin Hood and his band of outlaws had shot them, and the King was greatly angered. He swore to arrest both the bold archer and his friend, Sir Richard-of-the-Lea, who was hiding from the law, and under the protection of Robin.

For more than a month did the King dwell at Nottingham, but Robin was like a will-o'-the-wisp. He shot the deer just as he pleased, but never could he be seen.

One day a forester appeared before the King and offered to lead him and half a dozen of his knights to where Robin could be found, but he bade them disguise themselves in the garb of monks.

Then the King and his knights dressed themselves in monks' robes, and followed their guide. Richard was singing gaily, for here was that for which he was always ready—an adventure.

They reached the edge of the forest, and there was Robin Hood, and with him were many of his men. The King wore the broad hat of an abbot over his cowl, and so Robin caught hold of his horse's bridle and said: "Sir Abbot, for the sake of charity, give us some of your riches."

The supposed Abbot replied: "I have but fifty pounds with me. For four weeks I have been staying at Nottingham with the King, and have spent my money; but what I have you may take."

Then Robin took the fifty pounds and gave half the sum to his men; the other half he returned to the Abbot, saying: "Sir Abbot, I will not despoil you of all your wealth. We shall meet again, when you may be more heavily burdened with gold."

The Abbot thanked him for returning half the money, and asked him to visit Nottingham with him, promising that there he should dine with the King himself.

To this Robin replied: "There is no man I love as I do my King, but to-day you must dine with me under my trysting-tree."

With this he blew his horn, and immediately eight score young men appeared from the forest, and bowed before him.

The Abbot and his monks were then conducted to the trysting-tree, beneath which was spread a feast of fat venison, white bread, wine and brown ale.

Robin cried: "Welcome, Sir Abbot! After we have feasted, you shall see the kind of life we live here, and this you shall tell to the King."

Then the yeomen of the greenwood bent their bows and sent their arrows so near the King that he feared he would be shot. Their skill astounded him.

After this, targets of flowers were set up, and in the center of each was a rose. And Robin said that whoever should fail to hit the rose should lose his bow and arrows, and also receive a blow upon his bare head.

Several missed the mark and received the promised buffet. Robin himself shot three times and hit the rose, but the next arrow missed by a finger's breadth, whereupon Little John cried out: "Master, you lose your bow and arrows. Now stand up and take your blows."

Then Robin said to the King: "Sir Abbot, I give you my bow and arrows, and I beg you to give me my blow."

The King replied: "Nay, I cannot smite so brave a yeoman."

But Robin insisted and told him to strike as hard as he could.

At this the King rolled back his sleeve, and Robin received such a buffet that he was felled to the ground, and for a few moments he lay there, seeing myriads of stars. When he came to himself he said: "I thought there was but one in all England able to deliver such a blow." Then he looked closely at the Abbot, and in him recognized the King. He fell upon his knees and cried: "King Richard, now I

know you. I ask pardon for Sir Richard-ofthe-Lea, my men and myself."

"It is granted, Robin Hood," said the King, "provided you and your archers will leave the greenwood, and come to London with me and enter my service."

"Right gladly will we," said Robin. "But if I do not like your service, I shall return again to Sherwood and shoot the deer as I have done."

This was agreed upon, and then the King asked Robin if he had green cloth. When it was brought the King and his knights put on the Lincoln green in place of their monks' robes, and all set off for Nottingham.

When they reached the city the people saw all the green cloaks and feared their King was slain. But Richard laughed at this, and ordered that his return with Robin Hood be celebrated with feast and revelry, and he caused great rejoicing by giving back to Sir Richard-of-the-Lea his lands, which had been confiscated by the Sheriff of Nottingham.

For a whole year Robin stayed at the King's court, but by the end of this time the call of

the greenwood was more than he could resist, and reminding King Richard of his promise to let him return, he and his men left London.

They were filled with joy when they reached Sherwood, which had never seemed so beautiful to them before. And there Robin took up his old life, and never again could he be tempted to dwell in the city.

* HAVELOK THE DANE

KING ETHELWEARD OF ENGLAND, although he had reigned but a short time, had done much for his country, to which he had given peace and prosperity. His people loved him, and great was their sorrow when it was known that he was mortally ill.

His great concern was for his only child, a baby girl, and so he summoned his councillors to Winchester, which was then the capital, to select a guardian for his daughter, and a regent to rule the country until she should become of age.

The wise men upon whom he called agreed that to Earl Godwin should be intrusted the care of the child, and also that, as he was a bold and clever statesman, he should be appointed Regent of the kingdom upon the death of Ethelweard.

^{*} A legend of Grimsby.

Then the Earl swore a sacred oath that he would guard the child, whose name was Goldborough, until she was of an age to marry, and then to select for her the strongest and best man in the country for a husband, and to them deliver the government of the realm.

Soon after this the King passed away, and the Earl took possession of the throne. He did not gain the love of the people as the King had done, because his chief desire was to gain power and riches for himself. To this end he appointed to office only such men as would obey him absolutely and do his will in all things, and soon the people only feared him.

As time went on Goldborough grew up to be a very good and beautiful maiden, and Earl Godwin became more and more jealous of her. He determined that she should never be queen, but that his son should rule in her place. So he sent her to a strong castle on the east coast, and set such a close watch over her that she was practically a prisoner. No one was allowed to visit her, nor was she permitted to leave the castle.

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Now at this time there was a king of Denmark who had three young children, a son and two daughters, whose names were Havelok, Swanborough, and Helfed. Stricken with sickness and feeling that his end was near, he sent for his chief adviser, Godard, and to him gave the care of his children, making him take oath that he would love and guard them until the boy Havelok was old enough to take over the responsibilities of governing the kingdom.

The King died, and then Godard had the three children shut up in a castle, and traitorously plotted to get rid of them. One day he went to see them, and found them cold and hungry. Havelok ran to him and begged that food and warm clothes be given them, telling him how they had suffered. But he was heartless, and instead of helping them, he took the two little girls and killed them. He intended the same fate for Havelok, but the boy begged for mercy, and promised to leave Denmark and give up his claim to the throne if his life were spared.

For a little while the traitor Godard felt

some pity for the boy. He thought of his violence toward the two girls, but he knew that so long as Havelok lived, neither he nor his own children could be sure of wearing the crown in safety. Then he resolved that the young Prince should die, but by other hands than his.

So he sent for a fisherman named Grim, and promised him great riches if he would see that Havelok was drowned. Grim consented, and having bound and gagged the Prince, he put him in a sack and carried him to his own home, intending to drop him in the sea during the night.

Grim told his wife of the promise he had made to get rid of the boy, and of the wealth he was to receive for the deed, so at the hour of midnight they went to the sack in which Havelok was still tied, intent on carrying out their evil work. What was their surprise to find the place bright, as though from a ray of sunlight! They were filled with astonishment, and together opened the sack and untied the ropes which bound him. They examined his body, and on his shoulder saw the mark of a cross.

It was well known that the heir to the Danish throne had this birthmark, and this sign told them who he was, and why Godard sought to have him removed. They begged the young Prince to forgive them and said they would watch over him and keep him safe until he was old enough to avenge his sisters and to win his kingdom. They gave him food and drink and treated him tenderly, telling him that he need have no more fear.

The next day Grim told Godard that the boy was drowned and asked for the promised reward. This was refused, and Godard even threatened to have him executed, feeling that the fisherman was now in his power.

Grim knew that his life would not be safe in Denmark, so he lost no time in selling his goods and fitting up his ship. Then he set sail for England, taking with him his wife, three sons and two daughters, and Havelok. They were overtaken by a storm and driven ashore near the mouth of the River Humber. They settled where they landed, and from that time the place has been known as Grimsby.

For some years they lived at Grimsby, mak-

ing a fair living by catching and selling fish. But at length a famine came upon that part of the country, and it became hard work to find food for the family. Then Havelok, unwilling to be a burden upon Grim, set out for the city of Lincoln, to see if he could find work. He was a very strong and willing youth, and soon found a place in the Earl of Lincoln's household, where he became one of the cook's menials. Here he soon became a favorite with everyone, especially with the children. He grew quickly in strength and stature, and became known as the tallest man in Lincoln, and one of the strongest in all the country. And his nature was as gentle as his body was powerful.

The city of Lincoln was famous for its strong men, and the people were very fond of games and sports requiring skill and strength. It happened that Godwin, Regent of England, was visiting Lincoln whilst some games were being held, and one of the events was putting the stone. In this case the stone was a very heavy one, so heavy that but few of the men could even lift it. Havelok was the last to

try his hand, and he easily put it many feet farther than any of the others had done. It was quite a marvelous feat, and so many people spoke of it that in time Godwin heard of it. He sent for Havelok, and ordered him to repeat his exploit before him.

A plan came to his mind by which he could make it impossible for the Princess Goldborough, who had been a prisoner all these years, to ever be the queen of England. He had promised King Ethelweard to marry his daughter to the strongest man in the country, and if she would wed this castle menial, the people would never consent to have one of such low estate to be their ruler. Of course he knew that when the King had said the "strongest" man he did not mean physical strength, but this appealed to his sense of humor, and besides, it would humiliate the Princess. So he sent for Goldborough, and forced her to marry Havelok, much against the wills of both.

Havelok knew that it would not do for him and his wife to stay in Lincoln on account of Godwin's hatred, and so he determined to return to Grimsby and ask the advice of his old friends. From them they received a hearty welcome, and Havelok promised to stay there for the time being.

Goldborough felt sad at having been forced to marry a stranger, and one of such lowly birth. But that night, as she lay awake, she saw the same light on Havelok's face and the cross on his shoulder that Grim and his wife had seen many years ago. And a voice said to her: "Your husband is of royal birth and shall be the king of both Denmark and England."

She awoke Havelok, and told him what the voice had said to her. And he, surprised, said that he had been dreaming the same thing.

In the morning they told this to their friends, and it was decided that Grim's sons should go with them to Denmark.

So Havelok, Goldborough, and Grim's sons took ship, and in due time they reached Denmark. They went at once to the castle of Count Ubbe, a Danish nobleman who had been a friend of Havelok's father. From him they obtained permission to engage in trade in his part of the country.

Ubbe received them with kindness, and invited them all to a banquet at his castle. He became so friendly toward them that, when the feast was over, he sent them, with an escort, to the house of a knightly friend of his, Sir Bernard Brown, who was pleased to pro-

They had hardly retired to rest when there was a great clamor at the door and a voice was heard crying aloud: "Let us in, or we will kill all within the house."

vide for them a good abiding-place for the

night.

Sir Bernard seized an axe, went to the door and called out to the band of robbers (for such they were) that if they did not quickly go away they would soon find themselves in prison.

The thieves, however, who were more than fifty in number, attempted to break open the door. Then Havelok withdrew the bolt, threw open the door, and invited the besiegers to come and fight with him.

With this they rushed at him, and Havelok, who was armed with an iron bar, drove them back after several of them had been slain. Then they threw stones at him and set their dogs upon him, and soon he received many wounds; but with the help of Sir Bernard and the three sons of Grim, the robbers were overcome and all of them slain.

The next day news of the fight reached Count Ubbe, and from Sir Bernard he learned that the victory was due almost entirely to Havelok, who had himself slain most of the thieves. When this deed of valor had been proved to the Count, he dubbed Havelok knight, and invited him and Goldborough to stay at the castle, for no honor could be too great for one who had shown himself so valiant.

So Havelok removed to the castle, and was given the room next to that of the Count, and a physician was summoned to attend to his wounds.

During that night Count Ubbe awoke and noticed a strong light coming from the next room. He went to find the cause, and found that it came from Havelok's mouth, and on his shoulder he saw the bright cross.

At this the Count summoned his knights and

showed to them all the cross which proved Havelok to be the rightful king. Then they all did homage to him and swore to help him win the crown of Denmark.

In the morning Ubbe proclaimed Havelok King before the people, who took oath to faithfully serve their new ruler.

Then Havelok was crowned, and following the ceremony there was much feasting and singing, and games and sports. The sons of Grim were made barons, and to each was given lands and cattle.

Although he was now the king, Havelok had before him the task of subduing the usurper Godard, and to this end he gathered together an army, at the head of which he put Robert, the oldest of Grim's sons. After a severe battle the traitor's forces were defeated and he himself, bound hand and foot, was taken before a jury of nobles. Godard was convicted of the murder of Havelok's two little sisters and sentenced to be executed. In due course the judgment of the court was carried out.

Being firmly seated upon the throne of

Denmark, Havelok decided to win that of England for Goldborough, who was the rightful queen. He set sail with his army and landed at Grimsby. The news speedily reached Earl Godwin, who swore to avenge himself by hanging both Havelok and Goldborough.

Godwin put himself at the head of a large force, and near Grimsby the two armies faced one another. The battle was begun by Havelok himself, and the fighting soon became general. Many were the deeds of valor on both sides, and great was the slaughter. Ubbe singled out Godwin, and these two engaged in a duel which lasted for many hours, neither being able to overcome the other. At last Godwin wounded Ubbe severely, and would have killed him had not Havelok carried him away to safety.

Then Havelok said to Godwin: "Did you not swear to King Ethelweard that you would hold the kingdom in trust for Goldborough until she should reach womanhood, and then give it up to her? Do now according to your oath, and you shall be forgiven for your injustice to her."

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Godwin's reply was to attack Havelok with his sword, and he smote so fiercely that the Dane's shield was cut in two. Havelok returned the blow with interest, and wounded his enemy so that he soon expired.

The battle was now over, and Godwin's knights swore to serve Goldborough and Havelok, who were proclaimed joint rulers of the country.

Havelok's first task, as soon as he had leisure, was to reward his old friends at Grimsby for all their care and kindness. Then he and Goldborough went to London, where they were crowned King and Queen with great ceremony.

When the festivities were over, Havelok made Ubbe Regent of Denmark, to rule in his stead, but he and Goldborough reigned over England for many happy years, and were greatly loved by all the people.

ST. ANDREW'S FIGHT WITH THE WIZARD

ST. ANDREW was seeking knightly adventure when he saw riding toward him a band of knights and ladies. On observing him they halted, and one of their number asked him, as soon as they were within speaking distance, who he was and what his business might be.

"I am a Christian knight in search of adventure," answered St. Andrew.

Now this was in the kingdom of Thrace, and the King of that country was one who hated all Christians, and fought against them, continually. He was with the company, and hearing that the lone knight was seeking warlike adventure, said that he should find it, and at once. "He shall fight my knights one after another," said he, "and shall meet with an honorable death. There is a very suitable space for a tourney here, so let a herald

announce this to him and the marshals shall draw up the lists."

The herald accordingly went to St. Andrew and told him that, as he was a Christian, he was an enemy to the King of Thrace, and must therefore die. But the King was a just ruler and had decreed for him a knightly death, having ordered that he do battle with his champions, one after another, and that for this tourney the lists were being set. The laws of chivalry would be observed and squires appointed to attend him.

St. Andrew knew that he could not fight foe after foe and not meet with defeat in the end, but he must uphold the Christian faith, and could not decline the combat. He therefore accepted the King's terms.

The herald then escorted St. Andrew to the lists, and presented him to the King, who appointed squires to wait upon him, bring him food and drink, and attend to his armor.

The trumpets sounded, and the Christian champion, from whose lance fluttered a pennon, upon which were the words, "A martyr or a conqueror," made his obeisance to the

King and then retired to his end of the lists, and a herald proclaimed: "The gallant knight, Sir Andrew of Scotland, will do battle against all comers for the honor of the Christian faith."

From the other end of the lists came a knight clad in silver armor, and as soon as the marshal had opened the tourney the two rode furiously at one another. They met with a terrific crash, and fortune was with St. Andrew, whose lance struck his opponent fairly upon the helmet and unhorsed him. He fell heavily to the ground and his neck was broken.

St. Andrew retired to his pavilion, and as soon as his squires had made sure that his armor and weapons were worthy, the trumpets blared, and he again rode into the lists to meet the next heathen champion, who this time was a knight clad in armor of gold.

The word was given and they rushed together. Each was struck by his opponent's lance, and although the pagan knight was unhorsed, he was not seriously injured. St. Andrew leaped from his horse, and the fight was continued with swords. The combat was soon

ended, for St. Andrew, with a tremendous sweep of his sword, broke through the defence of the golden knight and clove through his head, even to the neck.

This speedy defeat of their two champions brought angry murmurs from the spectators, who did not relish the Christian knight's victories.

St. Andrew was now wearied, but still he was eager to test the skill of his next antagonist. Again his squires tended him, and at the sound of the trumpet he left his pavilion, and saw facing him this time a knight in coalblack armor, riding a black horse, and on his lance was a black pennon.

This knight was a stranger to all, and the King sent a herald to him to discover his name. But the messenger returned, saying that the knight desired to be called the Unknown, and that he was anxious to do battle with the Christian. He hated all Christians, and wished to serve the King by causing the death of St. Andrew.

The black-armored knight was a very giant, and the King thought he would make short work of St. Andrew, so he readily allowed the combat.

The marshal gave the word, and like shots from a catapult, the knights dashed across the lists, meeting with a rending crash. Neither was hurt, although each staggered in his saddle, but both lances were shivered to atoms.

Fresh lances were obtained, and again they came together. This time each was unhorsed, and then shields were brought and the duel was continued on foot.

With swords drawn they rushed fiercely at one another, and steel striking steel made sounds like a blacksmith hammering on an anvil. So savagely did St. Andrew's enemy assail him that he was forced to retreat, and the onlookers cheered when they saw that he was hard pressed. But though he gave way, he fought warily, carefully watching his opponent, and causing him to advance in his eagerness. At last he saw his chance, and as the black knight aimed at his head a tremendous blow, which from its very fury was somewhat wild, he sprang to one side, and before the knight could recover his balance he struck

him so violently that his sword cleft him through to the shoulders.

It was a marvelous stroke. But the people were angered at this third defeat, and swarming over the barriers, they shouted: "Death to the Christian!" and the marshal was powerless to restrain them.

St. Andrew was filled with anger at this treachery. He had no hope now of his life, but he resolved to defend himself as well as he was able. He whirled his sword round his head like lightning, and attacked the mob with what strength he had left. His fury was great, and soon the people were running from him.

He went to the King and wrathfully denounced him for this breach of the laws of chivalry, and while he was speaking a squire ran across the lists with a look of horror upon his face.

"Sire," he cried, "I pray you come and look at the black knight."

The crowd was quiet, whispering fearfully to one another. The King, St. Andrew, and some of the courtiers went to where the body of the black knight lay. A squire then drew back the vizor of the helmet, and showed them a face so full of evil that they started back in horror. Upon the head was no hair; the eyes were shrunken and the teeth were like those of a wolf. The face was wizened and shrunken, and not that of a strong man who could bear arms.

"This is a wizard," said St. Andrew, "and not the man of strength with whom I fought. When I slew him his power vanished and he returned to what he was, a thing of evil."

"I think you are right, Sir Knight," said the King. "When we encountered you we were in search of a certain magician, and it may be that this is he whom you have slain. If so, I owe you a debt greater than I can repay. And now I beg your forgiveness for the lack of knightly courtesy which has been shown to you, and which can only be explained by our hatred toward all Christians."

The black knight proved to be the wizard for whom the King and his court were in search, and the King was now as eager to do honor to St. Andrew as he had been to cause his death.

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St. Andrew said to him gently: "Sire, you hated me because I was a Christian. You will reward me enough if henceforth you deal kindly with knights of my faith."

The King said that his hate had turned to love. They talked earnestly together, and in the end the King of Thrace and many of his people became Christians themselves.

OLIVER AND THE GIANT

QUIET prevailed in the camp; only the tread of the sentinels, and the occasional orders given by the officers were heard. All were tired and weary, for the great army of the Emperor Charlemagne had been fighting hard, and there had been but little rest for the warriors of late. But recently, in a great battle, they had defeated their enemy, and many brave knights were lying in their tents, sorely wounded.

The heavy thud of horses' hoofs breaks upon the stillness, coming nearer and nearer, and soon is seen the glitter of the sun upon the armor of a large body of riders. The sentries have given the alarm and the soldiers spring to arms. Suddenly the oncomers halt, and from their ranks comes a single horseman, clad in the full panoply of war.

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As the rider advances it is seen that he is a man of immense size, and mounted upon a massive steed. He dashes across the plain, and at length draws rein before the royal tent of Charlemagne.

Then, in a voice like the bellowing of an angry bull, he roared: "Behold, ruler of the Franks, I am here to do battle with any champion upon whom you may bestow the honor of combat with me. Send forth Roland, or Oliver, or both of them, or more if you wish. I have slain kings and princes and have the strength of many men."

Charlemagne asked his knights if any among them knew this noisy champion, and they replied that he was the giant Fierabras, son of the Moorish admiral. That he was well known to be a valiant man and a great fighter, who had indeed overcome kings and princes; that he was a great enemy of the Christians, and, moreover, had in his possession the Holy Sepulchre.

As the Emperor thought upon the deeds of this pagan warrior of such strength and renown, he was filled with anger, and turning to the

knights, he said: "Which among you will do battle with this boaster, for the honor of France?"

There was no reply, and Charlemagne looked upon them with amazement. That any should miss so great an opportunity for glory was more than he could understand. He looked at his own nephew, Roland, who was one of the Twelve Peers of France, known to all men for his great courage and brave deeds.

Roland saw the look of wonder and reproach fixed upon him, and he said with much bitterness: "We, your knights, have fought valiantly for you, and have won victories. Many of us are sorely wounded, even Oliver, my friend, who is near to death. And no praise have you given us for our valor, but instead have told us that our deeds, though brave, were as nothing compared with those which your knights of old would have done had they been fighting in our stead. Your own words to us give the reason for our silence."

This speech filled Charlemagne with anger, the more so that he knew in his heart that it was deserved. He had indeed belittled his knights even as Roland had said, although he had regretted the words as soon as he had spoken them.

But now he was unable, through his rage at being thus publicly rebuked, to give a reasonable answer, and he uttered bitter words, to which Roland as bitterly replied.

"Sire," said Roland, "why do you ask one of us to fight with Fierabras? Surely there is left at least one of the knights you praise so highly who may engage in combat with this giant!"

The knights feared for Roland on account of his bold words, and, indeed, it might have gone hardly with him, so great was Charlemagne's wrath, had not the giant at this moment burst forth into a roar so loud that he drowned all other sounds.

"Hasten, Emperor of the Franks," cried he, "and send forth your champion; and while he is preparing for battle, I will lay down and rest under yonder tree. And if you keep me waiting too long, I will come with my army, and your head shall be forfeit for your cowardice. Also your knights shall be my

slaves, and the others of your followers put to the sword."

With this the giant turned and rode to the tree he had pointed out, and when he had taken off his armor he lay down to sleep.

Charlemagne was pale with anger at the insults offered him by Fierabras, and he vented his wrath against his nephew Roland, and the quarrel between them became so heated that the knights were alarmed as to the fate of their companion.

Roland had been a great favorite of the Emperor on account of his great courage and valiant deeds; but now he remembered only the wounds of his friend Oliver, and his uncle's bitter words, and he resented the slight that had been put upon them all. In the dispute their voices were raised to such a pitch that they reached the ears of Oliver as he lay suffering on his bed, and he asked Garin, his squire, to find out the reason for the noise.

When he returned, Garin told Oliver about the challenge of the heathen champion, and how that no knight would accept it; and then he described the quarrel between Roland and Charlemagne. Oliver knew that his wounds caused his friend Roland as much pain as he himself was suffering, so great was the love between them, and his heart went out to him on account of the Emperor's harsh words. For a few minutes he said nothing, and then he asked Garin to bring his armor and help him to put it on.

He bathed and bandaged his wounds, but the effort was so great that the blood gushed forth from them, and Garin begged him to desist, saying that if he attempted to walk with his armor on he would surely die. But Oliver rebound himself, and having donned his armor, mounted his horse, and bearing his spear and favorite sword, rode to the Emperor's tent.

Charlemagne, knowing how near to death Oliver had been, was so surprised that he thought he must be dreaming. Then seeing that this was really his knight in flesh and blood, he cried: "Sir Oliver, why do you regard your life so lightly as to leave your bed when you are barely able to stand? Hasten back before it is too late."

But Oliver said: "Sire, I beg of you a favor.

I have fought for you these many years, seeking no reward. I ask that you grant my request."

Charlemagne thought Oliver to be delirious with fever, and so sought to soothe him. Therefore he said: "Ask what you will, for any favor you wish I will grant. I can refuse nothing to so brave a knight, but return at once to your bed, so that your wounds may be healed."

Oliver replied: "Sire, my request is that I may do battle with this heathen. When I have overcome him I will take care of my hurts."

The Emperor was grieved. He knew that Oliver was in no condition to accept the challenge, and that he was scarcely able to wield a sword. But he had given his royal word that the request would be granted, although he had not known then what boon would be asked, and he could not withdraw it. He dwelt upon the great strength of the giant, and tried to show Oliver how impossible it was for him to fight, wounded as he was. But Oliver was firm, and insisted that he be allowed to go.

The Emperor and his knights were sorely

grieved that one whom all loved should go, as they were sure, to his certain death, and they did their best to persuade Oliver not to engage in so unequal a contest, but he would not listen to them. He took Charlemagne's glove as a gage to bear with him to the fight, and asking the forgiveness of any who may have aught against him, he saluted the Emperor and his brothers in arms, and proudly rode toward his foe, whom he found asleep beneath the tree.

He awoke Fierabras with a loud cry, and said that the great Charlemagne had sent him to do battle as his champion, and also that he bore a message from his ruler, asking that he forsake his pagan idols, and turn to the one true God.

To this the giant replied: "I am the powerful Prince Fierabras, and hold in my possession the Sacred Tomb. Your words I hold in contempt and heed them not at all."

Then was Oliver filled with anger, and he said: "As you spurn Charlemagne's offer, heathen, let the fight begin."

At the giant's request, Oliver helped him

put on his armor, and then Fierabras asked him his name, saying that he wished to know whom he was to conquer.

Oliver replied that he was a poor and humble knight, called Garin, and the giant said, "Where, then, are the doughty lords Roland and Oliver, of whom you all brag so much? Why did not your Emperor send one of these to do battle with me?"

The pain of his wounds, which had opened afresh, caused Oliver to reel, and the gaze of the giant rested upon his face, which was pale as that of a corpse. Fierabras then said, with some gentleness in his voice: "Sir Garin, I see that you are wounded; it is not possible for you to fight with me."

Then was Oliver impatient, and he replied: "It is useless to talk, since you will take no heed to the Emperor's message. Let us begin the combat."

Fierabras said: "Great is my strength. How can I fight with one wounded near to death? Let me ask your Emperor to send another in your place."

But this Oliver refused, and said that his God would give him strength.

Thereupon they found a level place for battle, and many from each army came out to witness the fight. Fierabras prayed to his idols, and then turning to Oliver, asked if he had told him his true name.

Oliver replied: "I am Oliver, one of the Twelve Peers of France, and the friend of Roland."

"I could see," said the giant, "that you were no ordinary knight." And they rode at each other with such swiftness that their spears were broken.

Now Fierabras had three famous swords, which he called Baptism, Grabon, and Pleasaunce. Of these he chose the latter, and flew fiercely upon Oliver, who answered with so mighty a thrust that he broke off part of his opponent's helmet. In his turn Oliver received a blow that broke his shield, and the force of it made him stagger, so that he almost fell. He recovered himself, however, and put all his strength into a stroke that well-nigh finished the giant.

Fierabras began to breathe heavily, and for the first time began to feel a little doubtful as to the issue. He saw that he must press the fight, and with a great effort he fell so hard upon Oliver that he struck that valiant knight's sword from his hand.

And then he mocked him, saying: "Where is now the strength of which you boasted? Your God cannot return your sword."

Oliver was now in great difficulty. His shield was broken, so that he could not use it in an effort to cover himself while he tried to regain his sword, and also the pain of his wounds had become greater. Fierabras noticed this, and, admiring his bravery, offered to wait while he picked up his sword.

This Oliver refused, and prayed for rerenewed vigor and help. At this moment he looked about him, and saw that the giant's second sword, Baptism, was lying close by, for during the combat they had reached the spot where Fierabras had left his swords.

"See!" he cried, "here is the help for which I prayed, and with your own sword shall I win the victory!" And picking up the weapon, he rushed so fiercely upon the giant that he, dismayed and wearied, could ill with-

stand the onslaught. The sword pierced his armor, and with a great cry he fell heavily to the ground.

Into this blow Oliver had put all his remaining strength, and now he dare not move for fear he should fall, in such weak state was he. He bowed his head and gave thanks for the victory, while shouts of joy came from the Frankish hosts.

Fierabras was not mortally wounded, and in due time he recovered. But such an impression had Oliver's steadfastness and courage made upon him that he sought to learn more of the Christian faith, and it was not long before he renounced his idols and was baptised. He did all he could to undo the evil he had wrought, and he became a friend and comrade to Roland and Oliver, in whose company he was to perform many brave and valiant deeds.

KING RICHARD AND THE MINSTREL

Two men were wandering over the country-side of merry England; one of them, of graceful build, carried a guitar, upon which, when occasion offered at inn or castle, he produced marvelously sweet music. His companion, a man of immense strength, would sing songs of war and action in a voice which made the welkin ring. Both wore masks, and there was much wonder among those who were so fortunate as to listen to them as to who they were. They never stayed long in any one place, and there was always regret among their audience when they disappeared, which they did as suddenly as they came.

The singer was Prince Richard, the Lion-Hearted, and the minstrel was his friend Blondel. Although unlike in disposition, there existed between them a great love, which

only death would part. The Prince was wild and reckless, always ready for a fight when he could champion the weak, and his chivalry had won for him hosts of friends, who were proud to serve under him in whatever cause he might engage.

Curiously enough, his wild spirit delighted in melody, and he had put many a verse to Blondel's music. Quite often the two would travel together through village and town, with no other object in view than to enjoy their own company, and to please others as well as themselves with their playing and singing.

But this manner of life was not to last. time Richard became king, and while he would have liked nothing better than to have continued in the old way, Blondel would not have it so. His love for his friend and ruler was too strong, and he saw that it would not be for the country's good. He told Richard that now he was the king he must do his duty as such; but that if there were any hour when his kingship should not claim him, he would be ready at his call.

Richard saw the wisdom of the minstrel's

words, and loved him the more for them. They now saw little of one another, but their friendship never waned.

As a prince he was hot-blooded and impetuous, and being king did not change his spirit. He sought for chivalrous adventure, and bethought him of the Holy Sepulchre, which was in the hands of the Saracens. So he gathered together an army, gained the interest of King Philip of France, and they set out on their crusade for the rescue of the Sacred Tomb, resolved not to return until they had met with success.

Other monarchs had made the attempt, but either through jealousy or lack of strength had failed. Richard and Philip therefore took more and better equipped men, soldiers whose valor had been tested. So they started upon their quest, and found a foe worthy of them.

The Saracens, under their Emperor Saladin, were real fighting men, used to warfare, and victory in battle came to them as often as to the Crusaders. A town won was soon lost, and Richard learned to respect his adversaries as brave men and true soldiers. Then jealousy came between the French and English, frequently causing trouble in the Christian camp, and often Richard regretted having asked Philip to join him, for he came to see that he could have done as well with his own people, and perhaps have been more often victor, as there would then have been no quarreling in the ranks and between the officers of the allied armies.

Affairs in England had not gone well during Richard's absence, for his brother, Prince John, greatly desired to become ruler of the country, so he tried to start a revolution in his own favor.

Blondel had not gone with the expedition, but had stayed at home, having set himself the task of watching over the interests of his friend and King while he was away. He was quick to see that plots were being hatched to take the throne away from Richard, and he sighed for his speedy return.

The Sacred Tomb was still in the hands of the Saracens when Richard received news of this state of affairs at home, and he saw that his presence in England was necessary if he wished to keep his crown; and so, to his great sorrow, he was forced to relinquish his hopes for immediate victory over the infidels, and to return.

The quickest, and also the most dangerous, way home was through the countries of two of his bitter enemies, the Archduke Leopold of Austria and the King of Germany. But danger was something that the Lion Heart would rather encounter than not, so the thought of it did not deter him. Leaving his ship, he landed on the coast of Austria, and continued his journey through that country.

It is probable that had his friend Blondel been with him, he would have gone all the way by water, because that was the safer way for him, although longer, but as this wise counsellor was not there, he gladly took the more adventurous way.

Disguised as a merchant and attended by quite a retinue of his followers, he gaily started on his travels through Austria, and it was not long before the Archduke Leopold discovered who he really was. He received warning of this, and, as a measure of caution,

left his gentlemen and went on accompanied only by a page, believing that in this way he could escape the vigilance of his enemy more easily than if he were attended by a great company.

But, beyond this, he used little discretion and gave no heed to the danger in which he was. Being charitable, he gave much gold to the poor of the towns through which they passed, and this lavishness aroused curiosity, and in the end led to his arrest by Leopold, who was overjoyed at thus having in his power so mighty an enemy. Soon he was securely locked in a deep dungeon.

News of the seizure of King Richard soon came to the ear of the King of Germany, and he, jealous that the Archduke should have had the good fortune to make so important a capture, persuaded Leopold to sell his prisoner to him in return for a large sum of money. He then had him taken to a strong and desolate castle which was built upon a rock, a place in which many horrible deeds had been committed.

Now Blondel had known of Richard's leav-

ing the Holy Land, and naturally supposed that he would journey all the way to England by water, and he was greatly troubled when the ship arrived without him, especially when he was told that his friend had landed in Austria, thinking to reach England the more quickly by land.

For a long time he waited, but there was no news, and the people were sure that their King was dead. At last Blondel and a few faithful knights, who believed he still lived, set out in search of the Lion Heart, and landing where he had landed, followed the path which he had taken. Blondel gained the good will of the people by the sweet music of his guitar, and by careful questioning here and there, gained the information that a man of great courage and charity had passed through this or that town or village, accompanied by a page, and the description satisfied him that this was Richard.

And then came a time when Blondel could gain no more information, and his heart was heavy within him. It seemed as though the friend he loved must be dead. But still he persevered, and vowed that he would discover the fate of his King. He and his companions went on, and, after crossing the Danube, reached a wild valley near the river Rhine.

On one side were rocky hills, upon the highest of which was a grim-looking castle, showing darkly against the sky. Strangely enough, when Blondel looked at this forbidding castle, he felt almost happy, and something seemed to tell him that his quest was near the end. He said to the knights with him: "Hide here, while I climb the hill to the castle wall. There is that within me which says I shall find tidings of him we seek."

Blondel climbed the hill until he met a young shepherd. He questioned him as to the history of the castle, and asked if there were any prisoners in its dungeons. He learned that many crimes had been committed and much blood shed there, so much so that people avoided the place as a pestilence.

The minstrel tried to find out more about the castle, but the shepherd showed such fear that he would answer no more questions. Then Blondel played upon his guitar as a reward for the youth's courtesy, and sang a song to his own playing.

"Why, sir!" cried the shepherd, "that is the very song I have heard the poor knight who is prisoner in the south tower sing many times as I have watched my sheep; and he sings sweetly."

This filled Blondel with gladness, for then he knew where his friend was, and he soon found his way to the south tower of which the shepherd had spoken. There he sang a song, the verses of which Richard had himself written when Blondel had stirred his heart with the music of his guitar in the days when they had wandered about the countryside together. He finished the first verse and immediately the second was sung by a voice from within the tower, and that voice was King Richard's.

"My true and faithful Blondel!" cried the King.

Blondel said joyfully, "Sire, I thank God, that I have found you, and near by are hidden good knights and true who have been with me in the search, and now we must find means for your escape."

After talking for some time, the two friends parted, and Blondel sought the warden of the castle, and found him glad to welcome any stranger to so lonely and dismal a place, especially one who could produce such harmony as did Blondel with his guitar.

As soon as he could, Blondel returned to the knights, who were anxiously waiting. He told them how he had discovered King Richard, and that he had spoken with the keeper of the castle and had played for him. Then they took counsel together, to devise a plan for the rescue of their beloved ruler.

This was not easy, for they were too few to storm the castle, which was a tremendously strong fortress, so the only way was to use strategy. Each day Blondel went to the castle and played and sang to those there. He tried to find someone who would give him aid, but the soldiers knew only one thing, and that was to obey orders, and theirs were to defend the citadel and allow no prisoner to escape.

So Blondel had a hard task before him, but he persevered, and at last he saw that a beautiful damsel who, he found, was the jailer's daughter, often came to the great room where he entertained the company. She was so different from the coarse, dull-witted servitors that the contrast made him watch her with interest. Gracious and tender was she, and it was apparent that all loved her.

One evening, when Blondel was singing, the maiden came and sat by the light of the fire, where she rested her head upon her hands, dreaming. And then he knew that he loved her, and somehow he managed to let her know this by his songs.

After this he saw to it that they met more often, and soon she confessed her love for him. But she trembled when he told her of the imprisoned King, and of his desire that he escape. "Her father," she said, "was a harsh and cruel man, and one who would never betray his trust."

One morning the maiden sought Blondel, and told him that the next day her father had to report at the town, and that when he had gone, she would secure the key to the King's door. Then Blondel and his friends could see to the rest.

So Blondel made his plans, and that night he and his followers were hidden within the castle walls. After the jailer's departure in the morning, his daughter went to the south tower, where King Richard was imprisoned, and opening the door, said: "Follow me, Sire, but be careful, for the way is full of danger." And she led him safely to where Blondel and the knights were hidden.

There were shield, helmet and sword ready for the King, and when he had put these on, they prepared to leave the castle. The alarm was soon spread, but Blondel and his party were well prepared, and all being brave men, skilled in warfare, it was not long before their opponents were overcome and completely defeated.

The gates were opened, and all were soon mounted on fleet horses, which they urged to their utmost speed. With them went the brave maiden, who was soon married to Blondel.

Many adventures befell them on their way to the coast, but their courage overcame all danger, and at last they reached England, where Richard's presence was sorely needed. The King bestowed rich gifts upon Blondel and his wife, but none did they value so greatly as his love and friendship.

HORATIUS AT THE BRIDGE

TARQUIN THE PROUD was a tyrant, and his Roman subjects hated him. He thought himself to be securely seated on the throne, but his misdeeds were so many that he was always in fear lest someone he had wronged would wreak his vengeance upon him. At length he committed a deed which did rouse the people to rebel.

Lucretia was the wife of Collatinus, one of his most trusted officers. She was a woman of great beauty and nobility of character, loved by all who knew her. Tarquin planned to carry her off, but in this he failed. Lucretia wrote to her husband, who was away on duty, telling him of the Emperor's deed, and then plunged a dagger into her heart.

When Collatinus reached his home he found his wife dead, and he swore to avenge her blood upon Tarquin and all his race.

Lucretia's body was taken to the marketplace, where it was viewed by the people, and soon the story was spread over the country. The consequence was a revolution, and Tarquin fled, thereby saving his life, but his two sons were captured and executed.

The people decided after this to have no more emperors, so they chose two rulers, Collatinus and Brutus, who were called consuls.

Tarquin's one idea was to regain the throne he had lost, and he at length persuaded Lars Porsenna, King of the Etruscans, to march with a great army against Rome.

Now Rome is built upon hills, from the top of which one can see a great distance over the plain, and when the Etruscan army was nearing the city, the glint of the sun upon the armor was seen. Preparations for defense were made; cows and sheep which were grazing in the fields outside were brought into the city and the gates closed.

Between Rome and the approaching army was the river Tiber, which was spanned by a wooden bridge, on the farther side of which was a fortress. The Etruscans soon overcame

the soldiers there, and then the problem of destroying the bridge confronted the Romans. If the enemy were to cross, the city would without doubt be taken. The river was very broad and the current so swift that it was practically impossible for the soldiers, encumbered with arms and armor, to swim across, so that the destruction of the span meant the saving of the city.

The entrance to the bridge was so narrow that not more than three men abreast could comfortably stand there. This put a bold idea into the head of Horatius, the captain of the gate. If three brave men were to stand at this entrance, they could stay the advance of the enemy long enough, perhaps, for the bridge to be destroyed. He told his plan to the Roman commander, saying that he would be one of the three. Volunteers were called for and two selected.

It was a forlorn hope for three soldiers to keep an army of thousands at bay for the length of time required to cut down the bridge, but they were brave men and undaunted. So they ran to defend the narrow entrance, while the rest of the soldiers rained blows upon the wooden supports with axes and hammers.

The Etruscan leader laughed when he saw the three men take up their position. "Do these three expect to withstand the onslaught of my army while the bridge is being destroyed?" he said. "They will be killed long before the work can be done."

Porsenna launched his soldiers against the brave defenders, and one by one the Etruscans were vanquished. There was no faltering among the three, although they were weary and wounded. Soon the bridge began to tremble, and the Romans called to them to leave their post. Two of them dashed across, and just as they reached the other side it fell with a crash.

But brave Horatius scorned to flee, even though he faced an army. He stood there alone, the rushing river between him and safety.

Porsenna asked him to yield. He was a brave soldier himself, and admired the courage of Horatius. But such was the pride of the Roman, and so little was he afraid of death, that he actually turned his back to the enemy and looked across to the hills, upon one of which he could see his own house.

Then crying: "Father Tiber, take me into your keeping," he leaped into the river. He was wounded and weighted with armor, but somehow he reached the other side, and was pulled up on the bank.

There being now no bridge, the Etruscans settled down to besiege the city. They could not get into Rome, but neither could the Romans get out, and in time they were threatened with famine.

A number of young Roman nobles determined that the only way of escape was to kill Lars Porsenna, for they thought that if their leader were dead, the Etruscans would abandon the siege. So they cast lots to see which should make the first attempt. Gaius Mucius was the one selected for the deed, so disguising himself, he swam the river and reached the Etruscan camp in safety. There he saw a man dressed in a purple robe and surrounded by soldiers. "This man," he thought, "must be the King." So drawing his dagger, he rushed up to him and stabbed him.

It happened not to be Porsenna, however, but one high in authority. Mucius was immediately taken to the King, who asked him who he was, and why he had committed this deed.

Mucius obstinately refused to answer, so Porsenna said he should be put to the torture and made to speak.

At this the young Roman laughed, and putting his right hand into a fire which was burning close by, calmly held it there until it was burned to a crisp. "This will show you how little our people think of pain!" he cried.

Again Porsenna was forced to express his admiration of the courage shown by a worthy foe, and he bade the youth depart in peace.

"I thank you, Sire," said Mucius, "and for your courtesy I will tell you that I am but one of three hundred who have sworn to take your life, and sooner or later your end will come if you continue in your efforts against Rome."

The bravery of Horatius and Mucius appealed so greatly to Lars Porsenna, that he began to think that he had listened too readily to Tarquin, and after a while he sent messengers to the Romans, saying that he would

withdraw his army if they would permit Tarquin to take away from the city whatever might belong to him, and also give up a portion of their land. But until the treaty was signed, ten boys and ten maidens were to be held by the Etruscans as hostages.

These terms were accepted, and the ten boys and ten maidens were delivered to Porsenna. But the young people were lonely and unhappy away from their homes, and while sitting on the river bank an idea came to one of the girls. She had seen Horatius escape by swimming across the Tiber, so why should not they do the same? If he, wounded and weighed down with armor, could get across, surely they, who were young and strong, need not fear to make the attempt.

They all agreed, so one dark night they quietly let themselves into the water, and all reached the other side in safety.

But the Romans would do nothing that savored of dishonor, and these twenty children were pledged as hostages. In honor they were bound to return them to their enemy.

It was morning before the escape was dis-

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covered, and the sentries were about to take the news to their leader when boats were launched from the opposite shore, and soon the hostages were delivered again to the Etruscans.

This act of good faith impressed Porsenna greatly, and proved to him how much better it would be to have so noble a people as allies and friends rather than as enemies. He at once released the children, and then the treaty, which meant so much to Rome, was signed.

Tarquin endeavored to obtain help from other rulers, but without success, and he died an exile.

THE RETURN OF ODYSSEUS

For a long time Odysseus had been away on his wanderings. Year after year passed by without news of him, and Penelope, his wife, feared that he must be dead.

Penelope was very beautiful, and possessed much wealth. There were many suitors for her hand, and besides, the people of Ithaca wanted her to be married again, and they tried to persuade her to chose from among the eligible young men, with whom she had much trouble. They were not only jealous of one another, but were anxious to share her riches, and none of them would respect her wishes, and leave her alone. She refused to say "Yes" to any of them, because she still hoped that her husband was alive, and would return to her.

But they would give her no peace, and at length she started to weave a great piece of linen, and she said that when it was finished she would begin to think about wedding one of them, and would then make her choice.

Each day they saw her working studiously at her weaving, and saw the fabric grow larger and larger, but every night she undid some of her work, so that it might not be finished for a long time.

But one night a maid discovered what she was doing and let out the secret, so Penelope could not play this trick upon them any more, and soon the piece of linen was finished. And then it looked as though she would have to accept one of the young men.

Now she had a son named Telemachus, who was twelve years old. Penelope said to him: "My son, I am sure your father is still alive; you go and search for him, tell him the trouble we are in, and bring him back with you."

So Telemachus went to Greece, and there he heard that Odysseus was still alive, but no one could tell him where he was.

The fact is that he was held a prisoner. He and the companions who had been with him were shipwrecked, and he had been rescued by the nymph Calypso; all the others were lost. He was grateful to Calypso for having saved his life, but he longed to return to his wife; but the nymph would not let him go.

At length the gods sent Hermes, their messenger, to tell her that she must release Odysseus, and although very reluctant to do so, she had to obey.

So one morning, disguised as a beggar, Odysseus returned to Ithaca, and great was his joy when he again saw the old familiar places. He soon found out about Penelope's suitors, and as there were so many of them, he had to resort to strategy in order to get rid of them.

The goddess Athene helped him by making him look like a very old man. She caused his skin to wrinkle and made his hair turn gray. In his hand he carried a bag, to hold any scraps that might be given to him.

And now his disguise was perfect. This apparently aged man, leaning upon a stout staff, looked very different from the powerful Odysseus.

The first place he went to was the hut of his faithful old shepherd, Emmaus, who gave the wretched-looking beggar food and a bed.

The very next morning, just as Emmaus and the beggar were preparing their breakfast, Telemachus arrived, after his fruitless search. The three shared the meal, after which the shepherd went to tell Penelope of her son's return.

And now Odysseus and Telemachus were alone in the hut. Suddenly the goddess Athene appeared. To Telemachus she was invisible, but Odysseus saw her. She told him to reveal himself to his son, and tapping him with her wand, he was at once transformed into the tall and strong Odysseus, and great was the joy of Telemachus at beholding the father for whom he had been seeking.

Odysseus told his son that he must help him get rid of the rascally suitors, and he asked him how they were armed.

Telemachus answered that they had swords, but neither shields nor breastplates.

Odysseus said: "That is well. But are not the weapons hanging upon the wall of the hall as they used to be?"

"Yes," answered Telemachus, "they are still there."

"Then you must manage to take them away and hide them," said Odysseus, "and if any one should ask you where they are, say that they were rusty and dirty, and have been taken away to be cleaned. But for you and me, keep ready two swords, two shields and two spears, for we shall need them."

And now Telemachus returned to his mother, but he told no one about his father's return. In the meantime Athene had changed Odysseus back into the likeness of the beggar, so that when Emmaus came back to the hut he found the same old man he had left there.

Then Odysseus asked the shepherd to guide him to the palace, but Emmaus said it would be better for him not to go there, because the suitors were rough, and would ill-use him.

But Odysseus insisted, and said that he was used to rough treatment, and so Emmaus consented to take him.

On nearing the palace, Odysseus saw his old favorite dog Argos, who all these years had been pining for his master. He was old and weak now, but directly he saw Odysseus he knew him, in spite of his disguise. He barked

a welcome and jumped about, so great was his joy.

Odysseus caressed him, but the delight and excitement of the old dog at seeing his master again were too much, and the poor old fellow, with a sigh of content and happiness, rolled over dead. This show of affection brought tears to the eyes of Odysseus.

Soon they entered the hall, which was filled by the suitors, who were engaged with feasting and revelry. Odysseus went among them, begging; but they treated him harshly, mocking and jeering at him, and some of them struck him.

When night was come they went away, and then Odysseus and his son removed and hid the weapons. When this was done, Telemachus retired to his room, and the wanderer was left alone in the hall.

After a little while Penelope came into the room. She had been careful to keep away from the suitors, but now that they were gone she sought the stranger, who might be able to tell her something of her long-lost husband.

In answer to her questioning, he said that

he had indeed seen Odysseus, and she was assured of the truth of this, because he described the cloak he wore, and a brooch of peculiar workmanship with which it was fastened. These two things Penelope had given him herself. And when the wanderer told her that Odysseus was well, and would soon return, she was overjoyed.

Thinking the stranger to be weary after much journeying, she sent one of her women to bathe his feet.

The light in the hall was dim, so that the old woman who came to attend him did not discern his features. But it happened that she was his old nurse, and as soon as she had washed the dust from his feet, she felt a peculiar scar which an old wound had left, and at once she knew him to be her master.

So again was Odysseus recognized, in spite of his disguise; first by his dog and now by his faithful old nurse.

He requested her to say nothing of the discovery she had made, as he wished to be unknown for the present, and she promised to tell no one.

The stranger's views had greatly excited Penelope, and soon she returned to the hall that she might again listen to one who had seen her husband. The bathing was finished, and she told the wayfarer of her trouble with the suitors. She said that they insisted upon her making an immediate choice, and so she had decided that on the morrow she would get the great bow of Odysseus and the twelve iron axes, each with a hole in its blade, which he had used for practice.

Now Odysseus had been wont to set these axes in a row, and then, from a distance, send his arrow through all twelve. She would tell the suitors that he who could perform this feat with the bow and arrows of Odysseus should be the one upon whom her choice would fall.

The beggar said to Penelope: "Madam, before any of these men bend the bow of Odysseus, he himself will be with you."

"Oh, what happiness if it might only be true!" said Penelope. Then, bidding him good-night, she left him to his own reflections.

In the morning the huge bow was brought down, and the axes were set in a row, in readi-

ness for the test. Telemachus was the first to make the attempt, saying that none should take away his mother if his effort met with success.

But greater strength than he possessed was necessary. Then each suitor in his turn tried, but was unable to even bend the bow. After all had failed, the beggar meekly asked if he might be allowed a trial.

"Impertinent rogue!" said the suitors. "What sort of a bridegroom would a beggar like you make?"

But Penelope said that he should try, and that if he were successful he should be rewarded with money. And Telemachus added that if he could do what the rest of them were unable to, he should have the bow itself. Then he asked his mother to go to her own room, having in mind the rough work that might follow.

So Penelope went away with her maidens, and as soon as she had left the hall the disguised Odysseus took the bow.

It seemed strange for this apparently old and decrepit man to attempt a feat which had proved too much for so many young and strong men, and the suitors jeered and made fun of him.

But their jeering turned to wonder when he bent the great bow with ease, and the released arrow sped directly through the line of axeheads, and buried itself in the wall beyond.

Then Telemachus brought the swords and shields which he had put in a handy place, and giving one of each to his father, they together turned upon the suitors. A sharp but short fight followed, in which many of the intruders were slain, and the rest driven forth.

When the fight was over the goddess Athene appeared, and tapping Odysseus with her wand, changed him to his own self again.

At once Odysseus went to Penelope's room, and when she saw her own husband, she thought it must be a dream. But taking her hand, he led her to a seat, and told her of his wanderings and adventures; of how he had returned disguised on account of the suitors, from whom there would be no more trouble, and of how his dog and his old nurse had recognized him.

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There was great rejoicing in Ithaca over the return of Odysseus, and no more did he leave his wife Penelope.

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS TREE

IN the latter part of the seventh century, France was ruled by a great warrior called Duke Pepin.

At that time France was not the settled country it is now, and the Pope sent many missionaries to spread the gospel, and to teach those who had become Christians. Many fierce Teuton tribes wandered over the country, which was also threatened by invasion of the Saracens, who treated very cruelly those who refused to accept their faith.

Among the missionaries was a young man named Boniface, who was born in what was then known as Wessex, in the southwest of England.

Boniface was loved by all in the town of his birth. He was brave and handsome, and did not lack for good things, but he was one who could not live in idleness. He did not want to be rich and powerful, but what he really wished was to do lasting good to his fellow men.

He decided that the best thing he could do was to teach Christianity to the heathen, and so, despite the protests of his friends, he took ship and crossed the channel which separated England from the continent, landing in the country inhabited by the Teutons.

Boniface made his way through the country, preaching to the fierce Germans, and trying to turn them from their pagan ways. He suffered many hardships, and on many occasions narrowly escaped death. Yet he never faltered, and soon was known everywhere for his gentleness and love, and in time came to be called a saint.

At length he reached Rome, where he was well received by the Pope, who sent him, with others, to France, to try and convert the wild German tribes which were still roaming about the country. From these tribes Duke Pepin had promised to protect the missionaries.

About Christmastide in the year 714 Duke

Pepin died, and his son Charles ruled in his stead. A few years after this France was invaded by the Saracens, who laid waste the province of Aquitaine.

The Saracen general had heard of the rich abbeys that were in the city of Tours, and there he led his army, thinking to win much treasure. But at Poitiers, a town near to Tours, Duke Charles fell upon and utterly defeated them, and he did not rest until he had driven them out of France. And because of the heavy blows he dealt them, Charles was called the "Hammer."

When he had rid the country of the Saracens, Charles robbed the churches of their treasures in order to reward his soldiers, and so brought upon himself the wrath of the Pope. But he was so powerful that this gave him no concern.

Although he had incurred the Pope's anger, he did not cease to protect the missionaries who had been sent from Rome to preach to the German tribes. Particularly was he interested in St. Boniface, and he wrote a letter to all who had power in the land, saying that he was in his care.

For this protection St. Boniface, who had returned to his labors in Germany, wrote from that country a tribute to the power of his name, telling him that it helped greatly in the defence of the missionaries there, and in the guiding of the people away from the worshiping of idols.

One Christmas day, when St. Boniface was journeying in the north where the people prayed to their god Thor the Hammerer, he came upon a gathering of warriors, women and children, all clad in white, and in the center of them was a fire that had been lighted near the foot of an altar, close to which was a tall oak tree, sacred to Thor.

Near the altar stood a priest, and in front of him knelt a little child, who was doomed to die by the stroke of a hammer, as a peace offering to the mighty Thor.

But the sacrifice was not to be. With hurried steps Boniface went through the crowd, and standing before the priest, seized the hammer. Then simply, yet impressively, he told the people the story of Christ and His love, and said that this day was the anniversary of His birth.

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He then felled the sacred oak with the hammer, and when he had done this, he looked around, and saw, close by, a young fir tree, straight and green.

"Here is the tree which you shall call the Christmas Tree," he cried. "Remove it from the ground, set it up in the home of your leader, and there celebrate this day with songs of joy, and for no more shall the blood of innocent children be shed as a sacrifice."

They did as the saint directed, and since that time the fir tree has been the emblem of peace and good will in the homes of people everywhere during the joyous Christmastide.

THE CAPTURE OF VINCENNES

In the history of America there is no finer exhibition of indomitable courage than that shown by George Rogers Clark and his followers in the expedition which led to the capture of Vincennes.

Colonel Hamilton, who commanded the British forces at Detroit, captured the fort at Vincennes in December, 1779. It was intensely cold, and the march from Detroit had been long and arduous, so Hamilton decided to await the coming of spring before making the attempt to capture Kaskaskia, which had been taken by Colonel Clark.

Having no present need for a large force, he sent back to Detroit most of his soldiers, keeping with him one hundred and sixty men, half of whom were Indians.

News of the small force at Vincennes

reached Clark in the course of a few weeks, and he at once saw that this was an opportunity he could not afford to lose. In a week he was ready with a force of one hundred and seventy men, at the head of whom he set out to re-capture the fort at Vincennes.

In the meantime a mid-winter thaw had set in, and this made the journey much more difficult, because the melting ice and snow caused the rivers to overflow, so that for a large part of the way, which was through what is now the state of Illinois, the land was covered with water, sometimes to a depth of four or five feet. This was no easy undertaking, but one calling for every ounce of strength and all the grit the men possessed, and it must be remembered that this was a new country, and that no roads or bridges across the rivers had been built.

For food they depended to a great extent upon such animals and birds as were killed while on the march. The hardships were not great during the first few days. They slept at night in the open, but large fires were built, and around these they sat and told stories until sleep overcame them.

But when they reached a part of the Little Wabash river where two branches run parallel, their difficulty seemed to be insurmountable. In front of them was a stretch of about six miles of water, the land between the two branches being flooded to a considerable depth.

Here was an obstacle to overcome, and Clark put his wits to work. He soon saw a way out. Selecting a tree of large girth, he ordered his men to cut it down. The trunk was then hollowed, and the ends pointed, the result being a clumsy but staunch craft. In this the men and packs were paddled across, the horses swimming.

The making of the dugout and crossing the expanse of water took several days, and when this barrier had been passed, fresh trouble assailed them. Animals and birds had been driven away by the rising water, and now they were tormented by hunger, being unable to secure any game.

The situation was enough to daunt the spirit of any man; toiling through mud and water, shivering with cold, starving and exhausted, it And what a leader Clark proved himself to be! Suffering equally with his men, he was always gay and smiling, helping and encouraging those who seemed to be on the point of collapse. Only his inspiring example kept his little army on the march.

With such tools as they had the men fashioned some boats, and upon these they crossed
the great Wabash river. Their goal was now
near at hand, and had they been less weary and
hungry, Vincennes would have been reached
the same day. But for two days they had been
without food, and some of them were so enfeebled by the hardships through which they
had passed, that they had to be placed in the
boats, for most of the way was under water, the
land generally not being above the level of
the river bank.

Late in the afternoon of the same day a small hill was reached, and here fortune favored them in two ways. A bear was killed, and so provided them with meat, and also they were able to encamp for the night on dry land.

But the next day was a repetition of those

that had gone before, and they wearily dragged themselves through the mud and water. To make matters worse, an intensely cold wind had sprung up.

Vincennes was now almost in sight, but between the suffering and exhausted men and the fort was a long, but shallow, lake. Before them was that which would try their very souls.

Without hesitation Clark plunged unflinchingly into the icy water, which reached to his waist, and some of the hardiest of his men followed his example.

The distance across the lake was nearly five miles, and after struggling for about one-third of the distance, there were several who were absolutely unable to proceed any farther. These were supported until the boats reached them, and took them to the other side.

At last all reached the land, and there many of them simply fell, too weak even to stand. Fires were built, and with what bear meat there was left from the previous day, some very welcome broth was made.

With returning strength they advanced to

within a short distance of the fort, but care was taken that they should not be seen. There were many trees in the neighborhood, behind which they could hide.

They prepared for the attack and soon opened fire upon the garrison. The fighting continued during the night, and the next day Hamilton surrendered the fort.

The success of this enterprise brought an empire to the American people. It was made possible only by the tremendous energy and dauntless courage of a remarkable man, who contributed his own small fortune to bring the expedition to a triumphant issue. Faithfully and well did he serve his country, and the return he received for his sacrifices was the ingratitude of the government.

George Rogers Clark, a hero, passed away in 1818, the last years of his life having been spent in poverty.

THE PILGRIM FATHERS

WERE it not for a small party of Puritans, the village of Scrooby, in Nottinghamshire, England, would probably be quite unknown by name to the people of America.

In the early part of the seventeenth century there lived in Scrooby a number of people who did not belong to the established church of England, but formed a sect of their own. King James I declared that if they did not conform to the regular church, he would drive them out of the country.

Now there were others of this religious sect who had settled in Holland, so these people of Scrooby resolved to join their brethren in the faith. But it was not so easy a thing for them to leave their native country as it would seem, because an old law forbade people to leave their native land without a proper license. So it was hard for them to stay in England because they suffered persecution, and it was difficult for them to get away, chiefly on account of spies among them, who informed the authorities whenever the captain of a vessel had been bribed to take them across the North Sea.

At last they arranged with a Dutch captain to take them on board his ship at a very lonely place between Grimsby and Hull. One boat load had been taken on board, and the boat was returning for a second, when soldiers were seen to be coming in pursuit.

The anchor was weighed at once, and the ship went away, leaving those on shore to their fate. A storm sprang up, and the vessel, battered by wind and wave, was driven to the coast of Norway. But after fourteen days they reached Holland, and joined their brethren at Amsterdam.

Those who had been left behind were arrested, but they were not sentenced to jail, because no magistrate would proceed against them. Before long they managed, in parties of two or three, to join their friends in Amsterdam.

In the course of a year they were given permission to settle in the city of Leyden, where they lived and prospered for twelve years.

But prosperity made some of the younger people inclined to lead a gay life, which the leaders thought was not good for them, so a project was formed to start a Puritan colony in far-off America. This received the sanction of King James, who allowed them to make Southampton their headquarters until they should be ready to leave England.

The party left Delfshaven, in Holland, in the summer of 1620, making the voyage to Southampton in the Speedwell, a ship of about sixty tons. They were joined by a few people from London, who sailed round the coast in the Mayflower, a vessel of one hundred and eighty tons.

On August 5th of the same year, the two ships started on their adventurous voyage. But soon trouble came to the Speedwell, which began to leak badly. Both put into the port of Dartmouth, where the smaller boat was overhauled.

They made another start, and after sailing

three hundred miles, the Speedwell again leaked dangerously, so a return to England was made. There the Speedwell was condemned as unfit, and her passengers were transferred to the Mayflower, which now had 102 persons on board.

This overcrowded vessel put to sea again on September 6th, and for some time encountered no adverse winds. But there was no comfort for any, with so many people jammed in so small a space. They were terribly cramped for room, especially below deck, where the sleeping accommodations were very limited. And besides, the food they had was poor.

When about half-way across the ocean they were beset by severe gales, and this was a time to try the courage and fortitude of the bravest. The small craft was continually shaken from stem to stern, and in constant danger of foundering. To add to the horror of the situation, the continual battering of the waves caused the upper works to leak. Fortunately, the ship was well-built and firm below, but the captain was greatly alarmed at the twisting of a main beam.

It happened that one of the passengers had brought a stout iron screw with him, and with the help of this, the beam was set into its proper place, and strengthened. Had it not been for this, the ship probably would not have stood the strain.

The rough weather continued for many days, and the sufferings of all on board may be imagined; all had given up hope of ever reaching land. One young man, maddened by the misery below, ventured upon deck. A wave caught him, and carried him away, but through the rolling of the ship, he was able to take hold of the topsail-halyards. He managed to hold on to the rope, and, with great difficulty, was pulled on board.

Great was the joy of the adventurers when land was sighted. Since leaving Southampton more than thirteen weeks had passed, a time of utter wretchedness. They went ashore at Cape Cod, where the winters are long and severe, and they suffered considerably from the rigors of the climate, for which they were not prepared.

Captain Miles Standish, in command of a

party of sixteen men, started out upon an exploring expedition. It was not long before they saw some Indians, who quickly fled at their approach.

They discovered the remains of a house and a large iron kettle, which showed that white men had been there before them. They also found some Indian baskets filled with corn, which they took back to the ship.

At last a place at which they should settle was decided upon. It was on the mainland, opposite Cape Cod, where there was a good supply of water. It was on the 21st of December, 1620, that the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth rock, and this was the new England, where they could worship as they desired, without fear of persecution. Here was for them a land of freedom.

PAUL REVERE'S RIDE

THE English Parliament had passed the Boston Port Bill, which King George III had foolishly supposed would cause the people of the American colonies to regret that they had indulged in what was called the "Boston Tea Party," in which fifty men of Massachusetts, disguised as Mohawk Indians, had broken open and emptied into the water of Boston harbor, the contents of three hundred and forty-two chests of tea, which were on board the ships at anchor.

This action by Parliament meant that no ships could load or unload any merchandise at Boston until all of this tea had been paid for. It also meant that there should be military instead of civil rule in Massachusetts, and General Gage was appointed governor.

General Gage's rule was very strict. As no

trade by water was allowed, the people soon began to feel the loss of business. But they were not sorry for what they had done, instead, their anger grew. Their action was upheld by the other colonies, which helped them by sending quantities of food and live stock, and so the people of America became more and more united.

It was decided to hold a great meeting at Philadelphia, where each colony should be represented by chosen delegates, and so there was held what is known as the First Continental Congress. This was in 1774.

General Gage would not allow the Massachusetts Assembly to hold any more meetings, and so the people changed the name of this body to that of the Provincial Congress.

This was quite the opposite to what King George had expected or desired, because this Congress met only to make preparations for war. The most active leaders of the movement were John Hancock and Samuel Adams, and these two men General Gage declared to be traitors, and ordered their arrest.

It was known that Hancock and Adams

were in Lexington, not far from Boston, and also that the patriots had stored cannon and ammunition at a place called Concord, about eight miles from Lexington, so General Gage thought that he would kill two birds with one stone, and capture both men and military stores.

Now the Provincial Congress had enlisted the services of a number of men called minutemen, who were ready to be called upon a minute's notice for whatever service might be required. These men kept a careful watch upon the British general's movements, and they soon discovered that he had decided to send soldiers to capture John Hancock and Samuel Adams and to destroy the military stores at Concord.

The failure of this expedition was due to the midnight ride of Paul Revere, a young man without fear, and one of the most active of the minute-men. He was one of the Indians who had organized the "Boston Tea Party," and afterwards had gathered together a number of other daring spirits, who made it their business to keep a careful watch upon the plans of the British governor, and to report to their leaders.

So when the English soldiers were about to start on their expedition, these patriot spies hurried with the news to Doctor Warren, under whose direction they were. This was late in the afternoon of April 18th, 1775.

The doctor immediately ordered that two of the young men be prepared to ride to Lexington and Concord to rouse the people, and for this perilous journey he selected Paul Revere and William Dawes. Each was to go a different way, as the British were patroling the roads.

Dawes started first, riding at the top speed. Paul Revere was to wait until after dark. He made arrangements with a friend to tell him, by signaling with a lantern from the belfry of the Old North Church, in which direction the British were advancing. If they came by land, the signal was to be one sweep of the lantern, and if by water, two.

He then rode across the river to Charlestown, where he secured a swift horse. Here he waited impatiently for the signal, which seemed as though it would never appear. With eyes peering through the darkness, he waited. Had his friend fallen asleep? Had he been discovered? Each minute seemed to be an hour.

Then he saw the light. Twice the lantern made a circle, and by this he knew the soldiers were crossing the river.

He sprang into a saddle, and soon was speeding like the wind. A good thing for him that he was a splendid horseman, for he was heard by a patrol, who gave chase.

Fortunately, he knew the roads perfectly; a side-path was close at hand, and wheeling his horse, he dashed down this at breakneck speed. Applying both whip and spur, he was soon far ahead of his pursuers.

The houses along the road were quite a distance apart here, and at each one he stopped. Awakening the inhabitants, he called them to arms, telling them that the British soldiers were out.

The minute-men lost no time in gathering; they needed no second call.

At midnight Paul Revere reached Lexington, the wild ride from Charlestown having

taken just an hour. He arrived at the house where Hancock and Adams were staying, and found it to be well guarded by minute-men. They were at once aroused.

In a very short time William Dawes arrived safely. They were joined by another patriot, Samuel Prescott, and soon were on their way to Concord.

After riding about three miles, they encountered a British patrol. Paul Revere and William Dawes were taken prisoners, but Prescott managed to make his escape, and reached Concord safely.

But the object of the ride had been accomplished. The alarm was given, and the minute-men were out.

The arms and ammunition at Concord were hidden before the British arrived, and the two leaders, Hancock and Adams, escaped arrest.

Several hundred minute-men had met, and hiding behind the trees (for the country was well wooded), they awaited the British troops. Every American knew how to shoot, and from Concord to Lexington the British soldiers were constantly harrassed by the fire of an

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unseen foe. They had absolutely no chance against the colonists, who were familiar with this woodland fighting, and their whole force would probably have been killed or captured had they not received reinforcements at Lexington, which they reached in a panic-stricken condition. They finally arrived at Boston, having sustained a loss of three hundred men.

A PERFECT GENTLE KNIGHT

ALTHOUGH Sir Philip Sidney did not live a long life, he left a name for knightly courage and courtesy which will never die.

At the age of ten years he was sent away to school, and there he was loved by his comrades for his kindliness, his readiness to help others, and for his grace and reverence. As he grew toward manhood these qualities gained for him the love of many true friends who knew him well, and also that of others who had benefited by his assistance while unknown to him personally.

The years of Queen Elizabeth's reign are among the most glorious of England's history, and in Philip Sidney's character were combined the chivalrous and noble traits of his day, without the vices.

It was an age of adventure, when the

thoughts of men turned towards the doings of such heroes of the sea as Drake, Frobisher, Hawkins, and others whose daring and courage made so strong an appeal to the young man of spirit.

The achievements of these men made Sidney long to found a colony across the seas, in which life should be made worth the living, where the government should be one of justice and mercy, and where none need fear for his well-being, provided he did but do his duty.

He managed to incline Elizabeth to his great scheme to the extent of her granting him a charter permitting him to discover and inhabit a tract of land three millions of acres in extent. But first the land must be discovered.

Sidney was thirty-one years of age when he and Sir Francis Drake planned an expedition to the west, bent on adventure and discovery. At this time the Queen was very insistent upon his presence at the court, and so great secrecy had to be observed. It was made to appear that the voyage was to be under the sole command of Drake, and that Sidney should go to

Plymouth in the guise of a spectator when the expedition started. In reality he was to board ship, and be the second in command.

Preparations for departure from England were made, when the Queen discovered the secret. She at once refused him permission to join the expedition, and instead sent him to Flanders, where the English at that time were fighting against the army of Spain.

The town of Zutphen was being besieged, and Sidney was in command of a company of two hundred cavalry, with which he was endeavoring to cut off Spanish reinforcements. There was a fog so thick that nothing could be seen twenty feet away. Suddenly a breeze sprang up, and the fog cleared, and there in front of them were a thousand of the enemy's mounted troops, who at once charged upon the English.

Sir Philip's horse was killed from under him, but he managed to secure another. The fight against odds continued until help came, when the Spanish fled. During this conflict, Sidney received a bullet in the left leg, above the knee. The bone was broken, but he continued to fight in the saddle until the Spaniards had fled.

When he was lifted from his horse, he was in a terrible condition from loss of blood. But he suffered more from thirst than he did from his wound. He called for water and this was at once brought to him. Just as he was putting the cup to his lips, a wounded soldier was being carried by. The poor soldier cast longing eyes upon the water, and Sir Philip, knowing the man to be burning with fever, even as he himself was, handed the cup to him untouched, saying, "Drink first, friend, for your need is greater than mine."

Truly a knightly action, and one that will ever be remembered.

Sir Philip had received his death wound. He lingered for a few days before the end came, and so passed away, at the early age of thirty-two, one of the most knightly and courtly men of an heroic age.

"REMEMBER THE ALAMO"

WHEN the Spaniards first settled on the San Antonio River they built, as was their custom, a large mission which they called the Alamo.

The mission was built of stone, and was often used by the nearby settlers as a place of refuge when they were attacked by the Indians, as sometimes happened. The building itself was quite a large one, and with the surrounding wall, it covered a space of about three acres.

It was a place that could be easily defended against the Indians, whose chief weapon was the bow and arrow, but it was not strong enough to withstand artillery.

When the people of Texas declared their independence, Mexico sent an army of nearly two thousand soldiers against them. But the Texans, although small in number, were real

fighters, and they forced the Mexican commander to take refuge in the Alamo mission.

The Texans numbered only a few more than two hundred, but they drove the Mexicans out of the Alamo, and among the prisoners they took was General Cos, a relative of Santa Anna, President of Mexico, to whom he was paroled. This was in the early autumn of 1835.

Early in the following year the famous hunter, David Crockett, came to San Antonio, which is on the side of the river opposite the Alamo. He crossed the river and went to the fort, where he was heartily welcomed by Colonel Bowie and Lieutenant Colonel Travis, who were in command of a force of one hundred and sixty-two men. A few days after his arrival, the Texans were surprised by a Mexican army, led by Santa Anna himself, who demanded the unconditional surrender of the Alamo and its defenders.

Unfortunately, Colonel Bowie was very ill indeed at the time, so that all the responsibility lay upon the shoulders of the second in command, Colonel Travis.

But Travis was a brave and worthy man, and without a moment's hesitation, he refused Santa Anna's demand, which he answered with a cannon shot. Orders were quickly issued, and everything was done to put the fort in the best possible state for defence.

Colonel Travis sent two of his men for assistance, but although they managed to get through the Mexican lines, the help he so much needed did not reach him. A few days later he sent an officer who made a desperate, but successful, attempt to elude the vigilance of the besiegers. He narrowly escaped with his life, but finally reached a volunteer camp some distance away, and there he raised a small force of thirty-six men, who returned with him to the Alamo.

It seems strange that they should all reach the fort without being discovered, but this they did, and now the garrison numbered about one hundred and ninety.

One great point in favor of the Texans was that they knew how to shoot straight. Had the Mexicans been their equal in this respect, the brave defenders would soon have been annihilated. For nearly two weeks cannon and rifle balls were fired at the little fort, but the loss of life was very small, and little damage was done.

The Texans were sparing of their ammunition, the supply of which was limited, and not a shot was wasted. It was marvelous that a mere handful of men should hold at bay so many times their number, and this fact gave them a feeling of confidence.

But however skilfully the garrison might fight, Travis knew that this state of affairs could not last. Anxiously he looked for help, but none came. There was little rest for the devoted defenders; they were so small in number that constant alertness was necessary.

The Mexicans received reinforcements, and now were in a position for a frontal attack. Their army was divided into columns, each of which was provided with ladders. The officer commanding a column was given his particular point of assault, and the whole was planned so that every side should be attacked at the same time.

The signal for the advance was given at

daybreak, and every Mexican soldier was ordered to give no quarter. The assault was made at the double, and before long the west side was scaled, and the brave defenders driven from the surrounding wall into the buildings.

On the other side was the chapel, and here the Mexicans were repulsed, but at the cost of the life of Colonel Travis, who was shot through the head. On the north side an entrance was effected, but at tremendous loss to the attackers.

The Texans were fighting against overwhelming odds, and it was a case of each man for himself. There was no doubt as to the end, and each of the brave defenders thought only of fighting to the last, accounting for as many of his opponents as he could before he fell.

The Texans had formed into small groups, having been unable to gather together, and these were still active, as the continually growing heap of slain Mexicans showed. But the buildings in which they had taken refuge were carried by force of numbers, and the heroic garrison, one by one, fell.

One of the last to die was Colonel Bowie. Lying sick in his bed as he was, he could still pull a trigger, and in this way he accounted for five Mexicans. The body of David Crockett was afterwards found near a cannon which had been turned upon the attacking party in the courtyard, and had done great execution.

Of all who were in the Alamo, only two were left alive, one the wife of an officer, and the other a negro servant.

Thus ended a defence than which for heroism and bravery no greater example can be shown in the history of this continent. "Remember the Alamo" became the war-cry of the Texans which brought terror to the heart of the Mexican soldier, until Santa Anna was finally defeated at the battle of San Jacinto, and the independence of Texas won.

PETER, THE HERO OF HAARLEM

IT was late in the afternoon, and just beginning to get dark, when Peter's mother sent him on an errand, which took him about two miles from home.

Peter was a brave little Dutch boy, who lived at Haarlem, with his mother. This town is on the coast, where the North Sea sometimes gets very rough indeed.

The coast of Holland is very low, and a great deal of the country is below the level of the sea, so that there used to be great floods, which would cause much damage and loss of life.

To stop this the engineers built wonderful dikes to keep back the sea, and then it became safe for people to live there.

On this particular afternoon, as Peter was returning home, he noticed a small stream of

water running down the side of a dike. The sea was very rough, and the waves thundered as they hurled themselves against the walls, until it seemed as though nothing could withstand their fury.

Now everyone knew the danger of even the smallest leak in the walls of the dike, and Peter saw that something must be done at once to fill the hole, because though it were very small now, it would become larger and larger, until such a great volume of water would come through, that the low-lying country would be flooded, and the people would have to flee for their lives.

Without any hesitation he ran to the place where it was leaking, and found that he could just manage to fill the hole by thrusting his hand into it.

He cried at the top of his voice for help, but no one came. It soon became quite dark, and he was lonely, and shivering with the cold. He was hungry, too, and wet through, but he knew that he must not take his hand away.

How slowly the time passed! He shouted until he thought his throat would burst, and

still there was no one to answer his cries. He called out until his voice failed him.

But the brave boy knew that he must not leave his post, even though it cost him his life to stay there. He thought of his mother and of all the people who were in danger, and he knew that he was doing only his duty.

The hole gradually became larger, until at last it took his whole arm to stop the overflow of water. How stiff and sore he was, and how miserable he felt! But he was full of grit, and his courage never faltered.

Just before the dawn, when the night is darkest, he saw a light. Nearer and nearer it came, and then he saw the forms of men, and knew they were searching for him.

The thought of rescue put new life into Peter, and his voice came back to him. They lost no time in getting him home and into bed, and the leak in the dike was soon repaired.

Peter's mother had good reason to be proud of her courageous boy, the story of whose faithfulness and bravery will live forever.

ROGER WILLIAMS

THE Puritans had left their homes in England, and had risked their lives in crossing the Atlantic Ocean to establish, in an almost unknown country, a colony where they might worship according to their own religious ideas.

The King of England had treated them harshly because they practised a form of religion which differed from the established church, and they sought a place where they would be safe from persecution.

So they came to America and settled in Massachusetts, the first of the New England states.

As time went on they were joined by other Puritans from across the water. Some of the later arrivals had been people of wealth in England, and who had completed their education at the universities of Oxford or Cambridge.

There were strict laws in the new colony, and these were sternly enforced. For instance, there might be no work done on a Sunday, and a man was not even allowed to kiss his sweetheart or his wife on the Sabbath day.

Some of the settlers found these laws to be very irksome, and there were those, especially among the better educated, who advocated more liberal ideas. Perhaps the better known of these was Roger Williams, who, with his bride, arrived at Boston in the winter of 1631. He had left England on account of the religious persecution there, and had no doubt that perfect freedom would be found in the new colony.

He soon left Boston and went to Salem, where he was elected assistant preacher of the church. Here he courageously preached as he believed, and in a short while was obliged by the magistrates to leave the town. He and his wife then went to Plymouth, where they lived for two years, when they were allowed to return to Salem.

While at Plymouth, Williams saw a great deal of the Indians, of whom he became very fond. He not only learned their language, but he came to understand their nature, and gained their trust and friendship.

King James had given permission to the Puritans to occupy the land upon which they settled, and Roger Williams said that this belonged to the Indians, and therefore the King had no right to give it away.

This brought down upon his head the wrath of the Puritan magistrates, who were already angry with him because he had suggested in his preaching that there should be greater freedom than was permitted by their stern laws. He was a very forceful preacher, and his listeners began to think that perhaps he was right.

The authorities were aroused at the way in which he was gaining influence among the colonists, and so he was ordered to leave Massachusetts.

During his ministry he had worked very hard, and about this time he was stricken with illness, so he was allowed to stay at Salem through the winter on condition that he did not preach. But though he could not go to church, many of his friends came to visit him, and then it was determined that he should not merely be banished from Massachusetts, but should be sent back to England.

The news was secretly brought to Roger Williams, and he made up his mind to seek his Indian friends, with whom he knew he would be safe. It was hard to leave his wife and two little children, but there was no help for it, so he bade them good-bye.

Taking a hatchet, flint and steel, and as much food as he could carry, he started upon his journey to Mount Hope, where his Indian friend, chief Massasoit, lived. The distance was about eighty miles and he had only a compass to guide him.

It is wonderful that he ever reached his destination. The cold was intense, and he had but recently risen from a bed of sickness. The snow lay deep upon the ground; numbed and hungry, he toiled slowly on, until he lost knowledge of time and distance.

The journey was a terrible one, and often was he tempted to give up, lay down in the

snow, and die. But he thought of his wife and children, and of the good work that he felt he was yet to do, and he struggled on. In about three months he reached the Indian village, and there Massasoit welcomed him.

When the weather became warm the Indians gave him land at a place called Seekonk, and here he intended to form a settlement where there should be complete religious freedom. He had actually commenced the work of building the houses, when he received word from the governor of Massachusetts, who was friendly towards him, that this land belonged to that colony.

This made it necessary for him to seek another place, and so he asked the advice of his Indian friends. They told him of a beautiful spot on the shores of Narragansett Bay, where there was good spring water, and this land Roger, and some of his friends who had come to him, purchased from them and there founded a settlement to which they gave the name of Providence.

And so in 1636 began the colonizing of Rhode Island. The word went forth that here

was a place where all would be welcome, and where those who came would enjoy absolute freedom as to religious worship, and where the government was one of lawful equality.

Roger Williams was a man of high ideals. He was courageous enough to say and to do what he thought to be right. He bore no ill-will toward those who had driven him from Massachusetts, and on one occasion he saved many of them from being massacred by the Narragansett and Pequot Indians, at the risk of his own life.

In 1643 he returned to England, and procured a charter for the now prosperous colony of Rhode Island, and in 1654 was elected its president. In 1683, having reached the age of eighty-four years, he was laid to his rest, mourned alike by red man and white.

THE FALL OF QUEBEC

WILLIAM PITT, Prime Minister of England, had formed a scheme to drive the French out of Canada. He was quick to discover merit in others, and was a keen judge of character. He gave to James Wolfe the supreme command of this important expedition.

Wolfe's father was a soldier of note, and this is probably the reason for the son's having chosen a military career. At fifteen years of age young Wolfe received a commission as ensign, and served with the British army in Flanders. There he showed such ability, that, although a mere boy, his promotion was rapid. Events proved that the great Pitt acted with wisdom when he selected this comparatively young man, then thirty-two years of age, for a position of such consequence.

On February 17, 1759, Wolfe set sail from

England in command of an army of between eight and nine thousand men, and on June twenty-sixth, he landed his forces on the island of Orleans, almost opposite the citadel of Quebec.

The season being very hot and rainy, there was a great deal of sickness among his men, and Wolfe himself was stricken with fever. He begged his physician to patch him up so that he could show himself among his soldiers, and hearten them all he could.

There was some desultory fighting near Quebec, but no gains for either English or French. Thus matters stood until the summer began to wane, and still nothing was accomplished.

Montcalm, the French commander, was a wily and skilful general, and he foiled the attempts of Wolfe to obtain a footing in Quebec itself.

At last Wolfe decided to stake all in one desperate attempt, and so one night, having previously discovered through careful searching with his telescope an insufficiently guarded point in the high cliffs, he scaled the heights, and by daybreak on the morning of September thirteenth, he was with his army on the plains of Abraham, overlooking the city.

The young commander had no doubt that victory would be his, although his army had dwindled to five thousand men, and opposed to them were nearly twice that number.

The scaling of the cliffs had been an operation of almost unbelievable difficulty, one that was perhaps without a parallel in war. But he was a man of indomitable courage, and his soldiers loved and trusted him, and would follow him anywhere.

He was weakened by fever, and something told him that death would come to him during the battle, but his will was strong, and he did not falter. The strain upon him was great, and to relieve his feelings while floating in his boat down the river toward the spot selected for the landing, he recited his favorite poem, Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard."

Having finished the poem he turned to those about him and said: "Gentlemen, I would rather have written those lines than take Quebec." In the morning Montcalm was astounded to see the British army in battle array on the plains of Abraham. He knew the fight would be desperate, because there was no way of retreat open to his opponents.

The battle was fast and furious, and where it was the hottest, there was Wolfe. He was shot through the wrist, but nothing daunted, he bound the wound with his handkerchief. Again he was struck by a bullet, but he refused to leave the front. A third bullet brought him to the ground, and he was carried to the rear, mortally wounded. Knowing that his end was near, he refused the services of a surgeon, who, he said, would be better engaged in helping others.

He had almost passed away, when he heard someone say, "They run; they run." He asked, "Who runs?" "The enemy, sir," was the reply.

He rallied for a moment and gave one final order. Then saying, "Now God be praised! I die in peace," his spirit fled.

The victory was a decisive one, the enemy being completely routed. The citadel of Quebec soon capitulated, and thus was decided the fate of Canada.

The battle also saw the end of another noted soldier, for Montcalm, too, died like a hero. This gallant general was shot through the body, and with almost his last breath, he paid the following tribute of a true soldier to the valor of his enemy:

"As it is my misfortune for my army to be beaten and myself to be mortally wounded," said he, "I have the consolation of having been defeated by so brave an enemy. If I could survive, I would engage to beat three times the number of such forces as mine were, with a third of the British troops."

NATHAN HALE, PATRIOT

In the autumn of 1769 Nathan Hale, then fourteen years of age, began his college life at Yale. He was always eager to learn, and having been endowed with ability of a high order, his parents were anxious that his education be as liberal as possible.

As a child he was not robust, but his mother wisely saw that he spent much of his time in the open air, and encouraged him to indulge in games and exercises that would develop his body, and her care was rewarded by his increasing health and strength.

In character he was loyal and true, and, as perhaps is seldom the case, he was equally well liked by his school teachers and class-mates.

He was especially popular at Yale because of his athletic prowess. For this he became noted, and none of his fellow athletes could compare with him at swimming, vaulting, shooting with the rifle, or high and broad jumping. For the latter he established a record which stood for many years.

It was Nathan Hale's way to put his heart and soul into anything he undertook to do, and as it was with athletics, so it was with his studies.

He left Yale when eighteen years of age, and accepted the position of teacher at a school in East Haddam, Connecticut. Here he was so successful that other institutions sought to secure his services, and in the following year he took charge of the Union School, in New London.

In addition to his duties at this school, he conducted a class for young ladies between the hours of five and seven o'clock in the morning. It is a tribute either to his skill as a teacher or to his personality that he should be able to attract pupils to a class at such unusual hours.

Although so young, Hale felt that he had a call to teach, and we can see that he was meeting with success in his chosen career. But

Fate had decreed that he should be remembered not as a teacher, but as a loyal patriot.

For ten years there had been continual opposition among the American people to being subject to taxation without representation in the British Parliament. Dissatisfaction grew and finally came the Revolution.

The first act of violence to cause the shedding of blood took place on April 19th, 1775, when eight hundred soldiers, whom General Gage had despatched the previous night to destroy the ammunition which the people of Boston had sent to Concord, came into contact with the minute-men.

The alarm had been spread by Paul Revere and William Dawes, and at two o'clock in the morning one hundred and thirty patriots had assembled on Lexington Common, under the command of Captain Parker. At five o'clock the British soldiers reached the common, and the minute-men were ordered to throw down their arms.

This they refused to do, and then the order to fire was given. Sixteen patriots were killed or wounded as a result of this volley, and thus was the first blood of the American Revolution shed.

In less than a week nearly five thousand men had left their occupations, in the city or on the farm, and had volunteered their services to the leaders of the Revolution in Boston. Among them was the veteran Israel Putnam, who, on hearing the news, lost no time in heading a number of volunteers, and marching with them to headquarters.

The news of the fighting had spread rapidly, and meetings were held in village, town, and city. At one of these, held in New London, Nathan Hale was one of the chief speakers. Had he been ruled by his own impulse, he would have been the first to join the company which was raised that night, and which started for Boston the next day. But he did great work during the following few weeks in gaining recruits for the Revolutionary cause.

Hale wrote to his father, requesting his permission to join the forces which were being raised, and having received this, the next step was to secure a release from his contract with the authorities of the Union School. Having

gained this he was offered, and accepted, a commission in the Seve th Continental regiment.

His energies were now directed toward making himself proficient as a soldier and an officer. Early in the fall his regiment was ordered to Boston, and in the following spring to New York.

The soldiers belonging to the regiments stationed at New York had become dissatisfied with conditions. They were but poorly fed and clothed, and there were many desertions. Numbers of men, who had enlisted for a short period, were unwilling to re-enlist when their time was up, and this state of affairs was very trying to General Washington and his officers, who were well aware that the men had good reason for complaint. Nathan Hale himself promised to share his own pay with his company if they would stay with him.

The Continental Army numbered on paper about twenty thousand men, but not more than half of these were ready for duty, there being many sick and on furlough. And the men

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being for the most part raw recruits, it will be easily seen that every officer had to work hard in order to bring to a proper state of discipline among those under his command.

Two days before Christmas, 1775, Lieutenant Hale went to Connecticut in order to gain recruits, and on this mission he was fairly successful. With those he had secured, he went to the camp near Boston, which place he reached about the end of January, 1776. He was then promoted to the rank of captain, being assigned to the Nineteenth regiment.

All through the winter Washington beseiged the city of Boston, and in the spring the American forces beseiged Dorchester Heights, from which point they could command the city with their artillery, and General Howe was obliged to retire. The commanders of the two armies agreed that the British should leave Boston unmolested on condition that the city be not destroyed.

On March seventh the British army sailed away, and on the twentieth Washington and his soldiers entered the city in triumph.

Soon after this the American commander-

in-chief went to New York with a large part of his army, and among them was Nathan Hale.

During the summer the English had assembled an army of twenty-five thousand men, in addition to seventeen thousand Hessians. Washington's forces occupied Brooklyn and part of New York, which places he fortified.

Nathan Hale wrote to his brother Enoch from New York on August twentieth. It was the last of his letters to reach its destination, and it showed how near to his heart was the cause for which he was fighting.

On the morning of August twenty-seventh, the British army attacked the Americans in the neighborhood of Brooklyn, and the latter were defeated and retreated within their fortifications. Two days later Washington withdrew his whole army to New York.

This change of position was a remarkable and hazardous performance, and was effected during the night. The Americans were helped by a thick fog which covered Long Island, and at daybreak, when the fog had cleared away, the movement was discovered

by the British, who at once took possession of the abandoned entrenchments. But everything of value had been removed, there being nothing left behind other than a few useless guns.

The British fleet took up a position within cannon-shot of New York, and Washington entrenched his army at Harlem Heights. The Americans were safe for the time being, but their position was a dangerous one.

What General Washington now desired was information as to the enemy's movements. To obtain this accurately required the services of a spy of more than average ability. He must be a skilful draughtsman, that he might make sketches of the fortifications; he must understand military science, be able to estimate the number of the enemy, and be calm and collected under any condition that might arise.

A volunteer was required to undertake this dangerous mission, and Hale at once offered his services. It was a thing that a man could not be ordered to do, and his friends tried in vain to move him from his purpose. They

told him that it was not his nature to act as a spy, and that he could not make use of such deceit as would be necessary. He was reminded of the ignominious end that would be his if he were captured.

But all of these arguments were without avail. It was quite probable that he would lose his life, and life is particularly sweet to an ambitious young man. Here was a duty to be performed, one that required a cool head, tact, skill and ability. All of these were his, and he would not shrink from any service, however distasteful or dangerous, that his country required.

He bade his friends farewell, and left the camp during the first week of September, dressed as a civilian.

Hale reached New York safely, but of his adventures there nothing is known. However, he gained the necessary information, and by September twenty-first was prepared to make his way back to the American lines.

It has never become known who betrayed him to the British, but that night he was captured. It is supposed that he had been successful in making his way through the British army, both on Long Island and in New York. There he was arrested, and upon him were found sketches of the fortifications, together with various memoranda written in Latin.

He was taken before Sir William Howe, to whom he told his name, rank, and reason for having been in New York.

There was no formal trial, and Nathan Hale expected none. When he embarked upon his perilous mission he knew, that if caught, he must expect no mercy. His courage was equal to the demand made upon it, and he did not quail. He was condemned to be executed the following morning, and Sir William Howe placed him in the care of William Cunningham, provost marshal of the British army.

Nathan Hale made two requests of Cunningham, first for the services of a clergyman of his faith, and secondly for a Bible. Both were refused.

He was accompanied to his prison cell, in which he was to spend his last night upon earth, by Captain John Montressor, aide to

Sir William Howe. This officer was greatly attracted to Hale by the courage and dignity with which he bore himself, and asked if there were anything he could do for him? "I should esteem it a favor if you would allow me pen, ink and paper," said Hale.

Cunningham protested against this, but Montressor paid no attention to him, and at once procured the desired articles.

Nathan Hale spent the night in writing farewell letters to his relatives and friends, but these last words of his were destroyed in the morning by the brutal Cunningham.

The execution was to have taken place in the early morning of September twenty-second, but owing to the fact that a disastrous fire occurred in the city, the provost marshal's arrangements were delayed until the noon hour.

He was about to take his last look upon earth. Quiet and dignified he stood among those assembled to see him die. Cunningham asked if he wished to say anything, and Hale replied, in a voice that thrilled the listeners, "My only regret is that I have but one life to lose for my country."

A sentiment which will live so long as there are true men and women. The signal was given, and in a few moments all was over.

And so, at the early age of twenty-one, died Captain Nathan Hale. Ambitious, and endowed with more than ordinary ability, strength, and courage, he sacrificed his life upon the altar of patriotism. When he engaged upon his last service, he well knew the risk he ran, and he looked for no reward other than the knowledge that he had done his duty to his country, and he freely gave his life for the cause which he considered sacred.

THE SPARTAN THREE HUNDRED

THE Pass of Thermopylae led from Thessaly into Locris, and it varied in width from ten to fifty feet. Xerxes, King of Persia, had set out with an army of two and a half millions of men to invade the Grecian states, and there were only two narrow passes through which the Persians might reach Greece itself. For the defence of one of these, Thermopylae, there were gathered three hundred Spartans, under the command of the king, Leonidas.

The oracle at Delphi had foretold that the King of Sparta would die in this defence, but of death Leonidas was not afraid, and he was very willing to sacrifice his life for his country.

King Xerxes, knowing how brave the Spartans were, and that they would die rather than accept defeat, encamped his immense army in full view of the defenders, thinking that even they would see how hopeless was their cause when they were but a few opposed to millions.

Thus he allowed five days to pass, and then, as no envoy from the Spartans came, he grew furious, and commanded the Medes and Scythians to capture the Greeks, and bring them before him.

Then thousands went against three hundred, only to be slain. For two days the flower of the great Persian army, including the warriors known as the Immortal Ten Thousand, hurled themselves against the devoted and dauntless Spartans, but without avail.

Though great in number, the space in which to fight was so limited, that the Persians could make no headway, and Xerxes even began to despair.

But there was a traitor among the Greeks, named Ephialtes. He was not one of the three hundred, these being all tried men and true. Greedy and grasping, he was willing to sell his country for gold.

It was on the evening of the second day that this faithless man made his way into the presence of the Persian King. To him he proposed that in return for a great reward, he would show his soldiers a hidden mountain path by which the Spartans could be surprised from the rear.

Xerxes accepted the offer, and sent one of his great generals, with a large body of men, to be guided by the traitor over this secret path.

Leonidas had set a guard of Athenians at this spot, and when they saw the enemy so near, they sought a position where they might withstand them. But the Persians only ignored them, and went on down the mountain under the guidance of Ephilates.

The Persian scouts were seen by the brave Spartans when morning came, and the defenders of the Pass, knowing the danger that now threatened them from the rear, took counsel together. The three hundred would not desert their post, holding such a course to be a shameful thing, and so they made themselves ready to fight to the death.

Until this time Leonidas had acted only upon the defensive, but now, with the enemy

swarming upon them from both front and rear, there was only one thing for them to do as permitted by their code of honor. They must fight and die to the last man, and thus uphold the glory of Sparta.

So the Spartan King and his warriors fell upon the advance-guard of the Persian host. They were few in numbers, but such was the fear of them in the hearts of their enemy, that the Persian officers were compelled to flog their men in order to keep them from running away.

It was a terrific struggle, and one to which there could be but one end. Among the first to fall was the brave Leonidas, but his death made his soldiers fight with greater desperation.

The last stand was made in the narrowest part of the Pass. Only a few Spartans were left now, and with the Persian soldiers, ready to attack these from the rear, were the Immortal Ten Thousand, who were among those led by the traitor over the mountain by the hidden path.

The three hundred were killed. To the

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last man they bravely faced the foe, and by sunset not one remained alive. But of their enemy more than twenty thousand were slain.

In the Pass of Thermopylae the Spartans were buried, and there monuments were erected in honor of the heroic Leonidas and his brave Three Hundred, who made so valiant an attempt to stem the tide of Persian invasion.



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